



This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

Usage guidelines

Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

We also ask that you:

- + *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.
- + *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.
- + *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.
- + *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

About Google Book Search

Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at <http://books.google.com/>

IMPROVEMENTS IN EDUCATION
DURING THE 18TH & 19TH CENTURIES

BEATRICE A. JOURDAN.

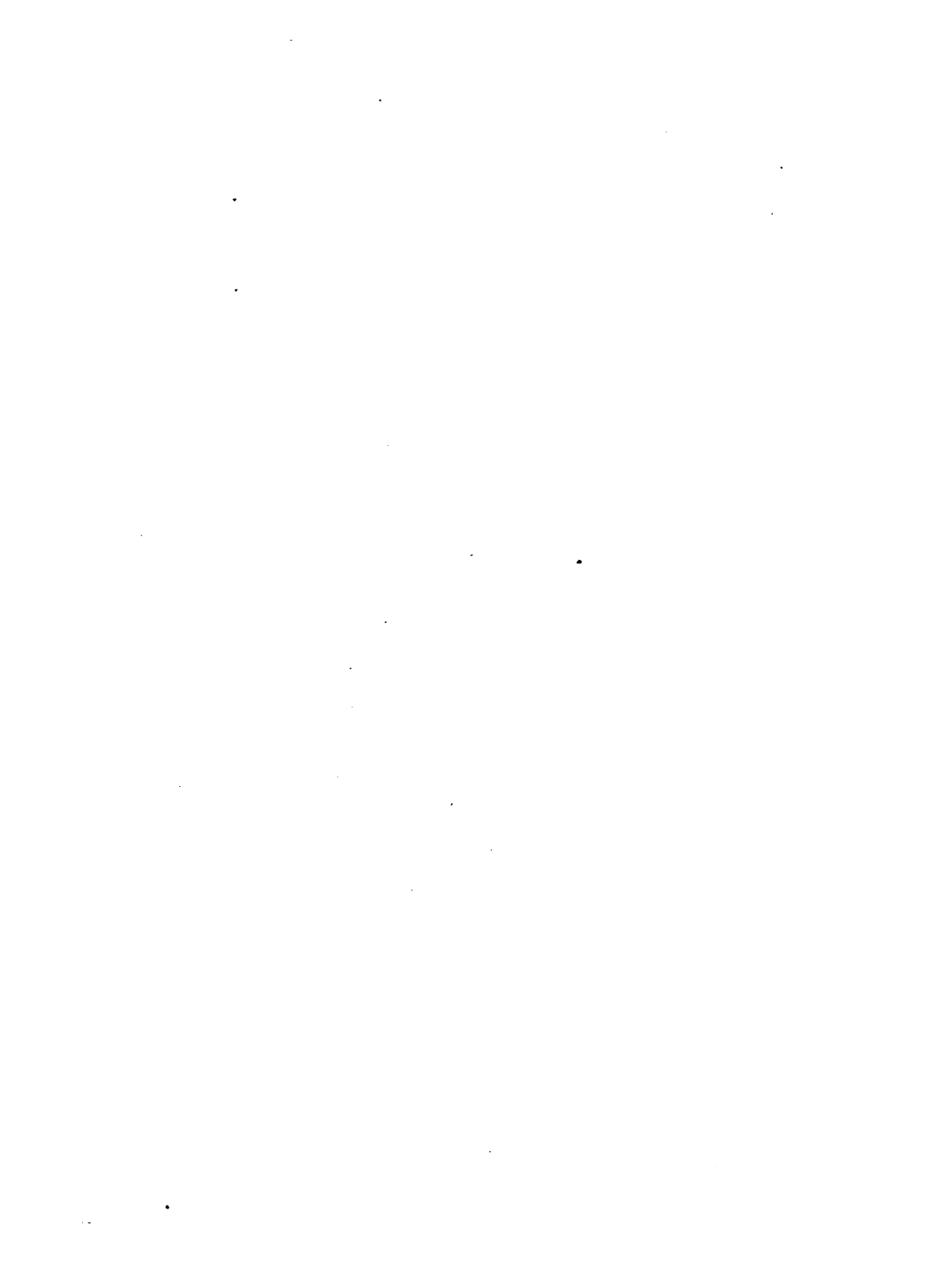


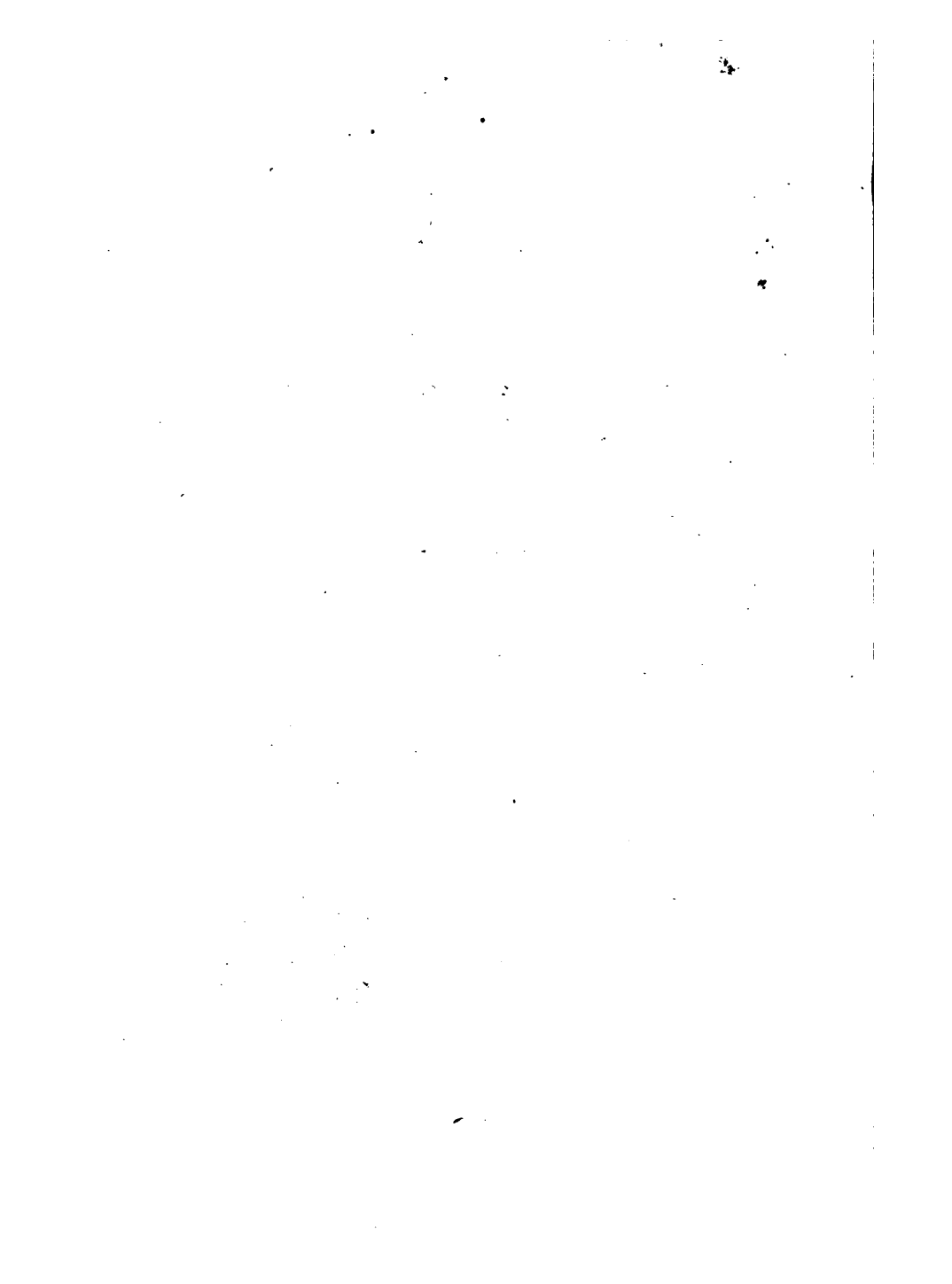
HOWARD MEDAL
STATISTICAL SOCIETY
1879.



600068170S







AN ESSAY
ON THE
IMPROVEMENTS IN THE EDUCATION
OF
Children and Young People
DURING THE 18TH AND 19TH CENTURIES.

BY
BEATRICE A. JOURDAN.

HOWARD PRIZE ESSAY OF THE STATISTICAL
SOCIETY, 1879.



LONDON:
ELLIOT STOCK, 62, PATERNOSTER ROW, E.C.

1880.

260. 4. 422



ESSAY.

IN considering the improvements which have taken place in education since the commencement of the eighteenth century, I feel as if I could not, in justice to my subject, altogether ignore the centuries preceding that epoch.

No sharply defined boundary-line marks off one century from another. Each age is, of course, the natural out-come of the age that has gone before it, inheriting, to a greater or less degree, its prejudices, gaining wisdom from its failures and successes, and occasionally—as in times of revolution, revolted and driven to an opposite extreme by experience of some peculiar form of oppression which has had on individuals or classes an especially injurious effect. I hope, therefore, that a slight sketch of the general state of education in Great Britain from the earliest times of which we have any record up to the close of the seventeenth century, will be regarded as a not unfitting introduction to the very vast and important subject I have ventured to take in hand.

One thing more in explanation;—in treating of education, I wish it to be understood that I use the word in its most commonly accepted sense, looking upon it chiefly from an intellectual point of view. Progress in moral and religious education can hardly be brought within the limits of numerical calculation,—except, indeed, by comparing the number of criminal convictions in an educated with those in an uneducated generation. But statistics of this nature, however satisfactory they may be so far as they go, can afford only a very rough estimate of the prevailing state of education considered under its moral and religious aspect. For proof of progress we must here consult not figures so much as the general condition of the society around us—its ordinary modes of thought and action. It will, I think, be found that moral and religious education go hand in hand to a great extent with the education of the intellect, each acting favourably on the other; but it is with the last-named that I must of necessity deal principally in the following pages.

At the latest gathering of the Social Science Congress 1878, it was remarked at one of the meetings that within the last thirty years greater strides had taken place in the cause of National Education than during the whole of the previous century. The speaker who made this assertion scarcely, perhaps, overstated the truth, yet a perennial “stream of bounty for the promotion of education” has flowed downwards from very early times, educational endowments being, in fact, almost coeval with the establishment of Christianity as the national faith. In evidence of this it may be mentioned that a school or college is known to have been founded at Canterbury about the middle of the eighth century, within eighty years or so after the landing of Augustine on his mission of conversion. It owed its origin

to Archbishop Theodore, who obtained for it a Papal Licence; and it is believed that either this college or its representative is the school designated the "City Grammar School," in a law-suit held at Canterbury before the archbishop in 1321. Its subsequent history cannot clearly be traced, but there is reason to think it may have continued down to the time of the Reformation, when it was superseded by the present "King's College School," founded by Henry VIII.

The precise nature of this or of any other school in its primitive form we cannot ascertain. There can, however, be no doubt that such schools were intended originally to benefit the higher classes alone. That even King Alfred, notwithstanding the breadth of his views, had attained to no other idea, is shown indirectly by an enactment he made to the effect that "all freeholders and persons *who possessed two hides of land and upwards* should send their children to school, and give them a liberal learning." *

After the death of Alfred, education seems to have declined, and to have remained for a long time in a state of eclipse, owing, very probably, to the frequent changes of government, the perpetual inroads of the Danes, and the distractions caused by the Norman invasion. The Conqueror brought, indeed, a certain amount of civilization and refinement in his train; but his attempt to force his own and the Latin tongue upon the nation whom he had trampled under foot, must have produced a sense of injury and irritation involving, very often, a hatred of scholarship. But, with the exception of Stephen's reign, the century and a half succeeding the Conquest was a time of comparative

* See Bartley's "Schools for the People."

quiet for the country at large, and learning began to revive. It was, moreover, fostered by the very great increase of religious houses in London and different parts of England, for to most of these monastic establishments a school was attached,—certain of the monks acting as teachers. In this way education spread,—we may suppose with some rapidity,—for Roger Bacon, the well-known philosophical Friar, who died in the year 1292, speaks with great pride of the schools of his day, declaring that there never was “so general an application to study in so many different faculties,” schools being erected “in every city, town, burgh or castle,” and “so many sciences taught that London was called not improperly the third University.”

The “sciences” to which Roger Bacon refers were probably grammar, music, arithmetic, logic, rhetoric, astronomy, and geometry; and these, reaching as they did the mystic number of seven, were supposed to embrace everything it was possible for the human mind to know. Acquaintance with them doubtless involved ability to understand Latin, but whatever crudities and absurdities may have mingled with the so-called scientific teaching of the age, the attempt to impart such teaching at all, places these primitive schools on a somewhat higher level than the grammar schools of a later date, where mastery over the dead languages was regarded as the be-all and the end-all of instruction.

From some cause or other the prosperous state to which education appears to have attained at the close of the thirteenth century was not of long continuance; in the following century, indeed, a very important public school—that of Winchester—was founded by William of Wykeham, but the monastic schools seem to have declined both in number and quality. In the

earlier part of the reign of Henry VI. a few attempts were made to mitigate the prevailing ignorance, but the Wars of the Roses intervened, and the country, as a whole, remained in a state of great intellectual darkness until the introduction of printing gave a sudden impetus to learning.

Then commenced that educational epoch which Mr. Bartley calls the "Grammar School Period,"—a period exhibiting an advance on any preceding age in this respect; that in it we trace a dawning desire for the *extension* of education. The munificence of the time found its chief vent in the creation and endowment of grammar-schools; and although we cannot suppose that the founders of these schools designed them for the elevation of the masses (whom they probably would regard with the old, inherited, feudal feelings), they were nevertheless careful to guard against the exclusion of any would-be scholar on the score of his poverty alone.

In some cases the grammar-schools were absolutely free, in the others a small fee was charged,—as at Warrington, where each scholar was to pay yearly a trifling sum, the amount of which was fixed at "a cock penny," or, "three potation pennies"—terms originally applied to the money paid to meet the expenses of the cock-pit, but afterwards, by a curious transition, used in reference to school fees.

With respect to the teaching and discipline prevailing in these schools, there can be little doubt that the former was oppressively dry, and the latter severe even to ruthlessness. Dean Colet, the excellent and enlightened founder of St. Paul's school, seems to have been the first to make any attempt to smooth the exceedingly steep and rugged road which young learners were then required to tread. In the preface to the Latin Grammar which

he compiled for the benefit of his scholars,* Colet says, in reference to his work, "that he had endeavoured to make it more easy for 'little wits,' judging that nothing may be too soft or too familiar for little children, specially the learning of a tongue unto them all strange." These words, and other portions of his preface, are pervaded by a spirit of such beautiful tenderness towards the young, that we are unwilling indeed to identify Colet with a certain unnamed Dean, who, Erasmus tells us, was accustomed, while in the act of dining at his college, to summon before him some one of his scholars in order that the unfortunate boy might be beaten in his presence. And this cruelty he would cause to be inflicted in the most merciless manner; and not alone by way of punishment for any distinct misdeed, but because he deemed it well to "humble" the young!

If the anecdote given above really relates to Colet (which, like Mr. Seebohm,† I venture to doubt), it gives one a painful impression of the educational system pursued at that period even by the liberal-minded and benevolent part of the community. It would appear that the English were especially distinguished for the harshness of their behaviour towards the young. Parents were said to be like severe schoolmasters, and schoolmasters to resemble the managers of Houses of Correction. "You English treat your children as if they were born mad," says a writer of the seventeenth century. If this remark (so full of melancholy significance when we bear in mind the old-fashioned treatment of lunatics) were at all applicable then, we cannot doubt that

* Generally known as "Lilly's Grammar." It received additions from Erasmus, Lilly, and others.

† See Seebohm's "Oxford Reformers."

it applied also to the state of things existing at an earlier date. But belief in the efficacy of corporal punishment, and of other rough-and-ready ways of imparting instruction and enforcing discipline, was by no means confined to England, or to times comparatively remote from our own. It was a wide-spread, almost universal faith, extending to the latter part, at least, of the last century, as I shall have occasion to show.

The revival of learning which had commenced a little before the Reformation, favoured that great religious movement, and was, in its turn, fostered by it, the new views tending inevitably to enfranchise all classes from priestly bondage, and from the influence, direct and indirect, of mediæval school men. The first Protestant king, Edward VI., was surrounded by learned advisers, and had himself received a learned education, and the many schools which in different parts of the country go by his name, or owe their origin to him, testify to the anxiety he showed to diffuse learning among his subjects. Nor was Elizabeth behindhand in this respect. Notwithstanding all her affectation and pedantry she had, no doubt, a sincere love of learning, and the establishment of Westminster School, in the face, it is said, of many obstacles, was due to her own personal and persistent exertions. Her full approval we may believe was given to an Act passed in the forty-third year of her reign, a rather remarkable Act, empowering the Lord Chancellor (among other things) to appoint censors, and inquire into the abuses which had crept into *School Endowments*—a few schools and colleges only—such as those of Westminster and Winchester, being expressly exempted from visitation.

This Act, however, though in intention very good, was, perhaps, on account of its actual excellence, unpopular in the

extreme. It fell into disuse probably before it had had time to produce much salutary effect, and within forty years of Elizabeth's death, other interests political and religious had cropped up, absorbing those connected with education, which of necessity suffered in consequence. The learning of that age being principally classical, was hardly likely to flourish under the influence of the Puritans. The great majority of them would regard it with contempt—possibly even with loathing; accounting it a “carnal” and “heathenish” thing; and though a fearful reaction soon came, and their authority was trodden to the dust, the frivolous age which followed was little favourable to any species of mental exertion.

Among the higher and middle classes of society (and with regard to these classes alone had the matter been hitherto esteemed worthy of attention) the education of women fell into singular disrepute, and as for the masses at large—steadily increasing as they must have been—it is difficult for us, with our modern ideas, to imagine even the depths of intellectual darkness in which they were suffered to remain. True, this darkness was no new thing, but every year can hardly have failed to render it more apparent. It was aggravated perhaps, to a certain degree by the prevailing state of the Grammar Schools, though these had never exercised much appreciable influence over the poor. It seems, however, that ruined by their own accumulated wealth, they had declined not only in efficiency but actually in numbers also, and that by the close of the seventeenth century they could no longer be regarded as in any sense “Schools for the People.”

It is curious to observe at how early a period the principle of compulsory education was partially recognized in Scotland. We find indeed that compulsion was applied in the case of the higher

classes alone, and with regard to boys only ; still the principle existed, for in the year 1494 it was enacted that "all barons and freeholders having children"—sons evidently—should under the penalty of a heavy fine, send them to school at the age of six to nine years, and from school to college in order that they might be instructed in "the laws" and fitted to discharge "civil offices." About a hundred and twenty years later, when Scotland for a brief period was under the Episcopal form of Church Government, the principle was carried yet further, the Scotch Bishops being authorised to erect a school in every parish subject to their jurisdiction. Nor did the matter rest here, for after the re-establishment of Presbyterianism, another act was passed, requiring that a schoolmaster should be appointed in every parish, and that he should be maintained in part at the expense of the landowner who was to build for him a house, and allow him a salary varying from five to eleven pounds a year, irrespective of the fees he might receive from his scholars.

In the face of such facts as these it cannot be doubted that the educational status of Scotland was far higher than that of England when the seventeenth century closed. Nor can we attribute this superiority to circumstances merely. Doubtless it was due in great measure to differences in national character and temperament. Explain it as one may, ignorance has always been held in Scotland as a deeper disgrace than it has been regarded by the same classes in our own country, and a far greater readiness has shown itself on the part of the poor to submit to sacrifices and endure privations for the sake of securing to their children the benefits of education.

Ireland, it need scarcely be said, has a sadder story, though in Ireland, also, attempts were made at a very early time to organize

a parochial system of education.* A statute passed in the twenty-eighth year of Henry VIII.'s reign, required the establishment of a school in every parish. But these parochial schools were never popular, for they were ostentatiously and intolerably Protestant, whereas the bulk of the people remained staunch adherents to the Roman Catholic faith. The consequence was that the law of Henry VIII. became obsolete, the "wylde Irish," as they were called, refusing to allow their children to profit by the instruction offered to them. Cromwell's attempts to stamp out Catholicism by the edge of the sword, failed as signally as they deserved, and when William III. came to the throne he found the old parochial system in complete decay. By Act of Parliament he endeavoured to revive it, but without success, for the manifest injustice of his enactments only enhanced the religious difficulty that had before existed, and in spite of all pains and penalties, national education as by law established, dwindled into nothingness. Thus in gloom and darkness the seventeenth century closed upon Ireland, leaving behind it an inheritance of political and theological rancour which it took long years to dissipate, even if it is dissipated at the present day.

We are accustomed to consider the commencement of the eighteenth century, at which period we have now arrived, as a golden age. We count up the many illustrious men with which it is associated, and pay to its taste a rather fantastic homage by attempting to imitate its furniture. Yet the general condition of education, while showing some signs of progress, was by no means high.

* See Reports of the Central Committee of Education, 1837, article—"Education in the United Kingdom."

Though the tide perhaps had turned in favour of female education, yet it was still at an exceptionally low ebb,—exceptionally, I mean, as compared with former ages. That schools for girls existed as early as the reign of Edward III. we have slight but sufficient proof in the Prologue to *The Canterbury Tales*. Chaucer's Prioress, whom we should rank as belonging to the upper-middle grade of society, had evidently been to school at Stratford-le-Bow—a well known locality for schools probably—the Brighton of our own day. She had there acquired her knowledge of French—French of the true *boarding school* type, as Chaucer gives us to understand by one of his inimitable touches. It was necessary to her position of Prioress that she should know something of French, which was still a semi-ecclesiastical language, but although her acquirements seem, generally, to have been of a superficial kind, she conveys the impression of being a carefully reared, and to a certain extent, a cultivated woman. How long the Stratford school, or schools, referred to by Chaucer, continued to exist we have no means of ascertaining, but a hundred years later there lived another Prioress—a real not a fictitious character—the Prioress of Sopwell Nunnery, St. Alban's, who stands out before us prominently as leading the vanguard of a very numerous band, that of English authoresses. She wrote a treatise on hawking and hunting, the first ever known, and composed besides a metrical translation of a Latin work dealing with heraldry; curious subjects for a nun to choose, but showing that she possessed some learning, and no small degree of literary ability. A few years later yet, and we come upon quite a galaxy of learned ladies. Lady Jane Grey, at the early age of fourteen, could read Plato for her own amusement. Mary's Latin letters were so good as to receive the commendation

of Erasmus, under whose notice they fell, and Elizabeth was able to converse in French, Latin, and Italian, and possessed besides such a knowledge of Greek that, according to the assertion of Ascham, there were not four Englishmen then living who in this respect surpassed her majesty. Her Court was reputed the most learned in the world, and the ancient ladies attached to it are described by old William Harrison, a contemporary writer, as "shunning idleness," in a severely intellectual manner. Some of them, he says, gave themselves up "to a continual reading either of the Holy Scriptures, or histories of their own or foreign nations," while "divers" employed their time in writing volumes of their own, or translating those of other men into the English or Latin tongues."

But, with the death of Elizabeth, female education declined, and remained long in a depressed state. Of course there was here and there a bright exception, as in the case of the well-known Puritan lady, Lucy Hutchinson, and of an accomplished young daughter whom John Evelyn lost in the evil day of the Restoration. Still, to the great majority of women, learning was practically tabooed. The dead languages, with regard to them, were no longer considered as a suitable or indeed an allowable branch of study; and in grammar and orthography they were suffered to perpetrate mistakes which would cause failure in a common school-girl, examined—say under Standard III. The sister queens, Mary and Anne, present in the extent of their acquirements a curious contrast to the daughters of Henry VIII. The latter, without doubt, were women of ability, and allowance must be made for natural differences which no amount of education can overcome, but however we may estimate the mental powers of Anne, her sister, according to Lord Macaulay, was fond

of history and poetry, and was regarded by very eminent men as a superior woman. But to illustrate the low state of even her education, he adds, "There is in the library of The Hague, a superb English Bible, which was delivered to her when she was crowned in Westminster Abbey." In the title page are these words in her own handwriting, "This book given to the King and I at our *Crownation*."

It must nevertheless be acknowledged that, owing to her early death, Mary belongs to the seventeenth century alone, and that with the commencement of the eighteenth, some signs of improvement begin to appear. I see these chiefly in the fact that in the parochial system of education (to which reference will soon be made), *girls* as well as boys were included. But with this exception, the old prejudices still remained nearly in full force. Music and dancing were included, we may suppose, in a young lady's education; she learned at least to step and curtsy gracefully, and to tinkle a few tunes on the spinet. She also read perhaps, occasionally, a page or two of history, but she probably could not name the counties of England, and as nothing must be done to foster in her any tendency towards pendency, the classics were to her a sealed book. The educational position of boys was widely different. In their case, every other subject, whether pertaining to history, science and art, was sacrificed remorselessly to the Moloch, as we may almost call it, of the Latin language. It is not easy to understand why this should have been. The marvellous beauty and expressiveness of ancient oratory and ancient poetry, could hardly be appreciated by the ordinary school boy, though by dint of incessant dinning or drumming he acquired, no doubt, a certain acquaintance with a few Latin phrases and rules of grammar, which, in after life, he

could possibly put to some small account. We perceive such a thing, at a later date, in the case of Boswell, who was unquestionably more ready with Latin quotations than any modern Boswell would be. This could not be otherwise, when we remember that whole years in a school boy's life were devoted to Latin, and that his application and memory were stimulated by methods that we should deem intolerably severe. Dr. Johnson bears witness to the great severity existing at the Litchfield School where he was educated. Although an advocate himself of corporal punishment, and attributing to it, in part, his own early proficiency, he speaks of his master as "wrong-headedly severe," recording as an instance of his *wrong-headedness* that he would suddenly desire a boy to give him the Latin of some, perhaps, unfamiliar word, and on failing to receive a right answer, would beat his poor pupil unmercifully, without troubling himself to ascertain whether his mistake arose from carelessness or from actual want of instruction.

We hope such a schoolmaster was exceptionally bad. Certainly had he lived in our day he would have run the risk of being frequently summoned before the Police Court. But parents in the eighteenth century were made of sterner stuff, and never dreamt of instituting law proceedings against their children's teacher because he had administered "a wholesome correction." Some few we cannot doubt, disapproved of the principle on which the great majority of schools were conducted, but their objections were not strong enough to bring about any general reform. Reform came in due course—was coming, perhaps, at this very time, as we should probably find could we compare even Dr. Johnson's school with those of Colet's day. Our imperfect means of information forbid us, however, to estimate the exact

amount of progress, which, as we look back upon it, appears less very likely than it actually was.

And having said much in disparagement of the age, I must mention to its credit and honour, that it witnessed the earliest efforts made to extend education to the masses of the people—the sons and daughters of men and women living literally by the sweat of their brow. These efforts commenced with the century, or, to speak with stricter accuracy, just two years earlier. They are due to the zeal of the Society for the Promotion of Christian Knowledge, which was formed in the year 1698, and which, true to the principles it professed, began its work by attempting to establish elementary schools in every parish in and about London. Reading, writing, and a rigid inculcation of the Catechism, formed the course of instruction suggested by the Society; and it is needless to add that the religious teaching imparted was meant to be in strict accordance with the doctrines of the Church of England, whose services all the children were required to attend. The schools were free, and their early popularity and rapid growth is readily to be accounted for when we find that they furnished clothing,—and not unfrequently board and lodging also,—to their scholars.* Two had been established in the City, and one at Westminster, before the close of 1698; and the following statistics will show how swiftly they increased in London:—

	No. of Schools.	Boys.	Girls.
Year 1704	54	1386	745
„ 1709	88	2181	1221

Such success involved considerable expenditure, to meet which,

* See “Bartley’s Schools for the People.”

means were resorted to suggestive occasionally of bribery; for it is said that sometimes the office of parish-clerk was offered to persons on condition of their setting up a cheap school.* Other methods however, perfectly legitimate, were employed—such as placing boxes at the doors of churches for the reception of money, and procuring celebrated preachers to plead in behalf of elementary education. Still the clergy, who especially interested themselves in the matter, had often much difficulty in raising the necessary funds; and we can hardly doubt that the school apparatus suffered in consequence.

In 1714, the year that George I. came to the throne, there were 1073 charity schools in England and Ireland, the numbers in attendance being 19,453. Of these a few schools—those in and about London—enjoyed an advantage not possessed by the rest; they were under the supervision of an Inspector appointed by the Christian Knowledge Society, and to this circumstance much of their early efficiency may be attributed. But throughout the country the clergy were accustomed periodically to examine the charity children, and if such examinations could not, in the very nature of things, be so searching and unbiassed as examinations conducted by a trained Inspector, they were doubtless productive of good. As years rolled on, however, the difficulty of obtaining teachers increased, which can scarcely be wondered at when we find the moral qualities required in them thus enumerated—"they were to be of meek tempers and humble behaviour, to have good government of themselves and their passions, and to keep good order." They were also to possess great aptitude for teaching; but here, one would say, the diffi-

* See Bartley's "Schools for the People."

culty ended, since they were merely expected in addition to "write a good hand and to understand arithmetic"—writing and arithmetic being *non-essential* qualifications in the case of school-mistresses, whose whole knowledge, we presume, might be limited to reading, to needlework, and to an acquaintance with the Scriptures.

In the remoter towns and villages of England, especially in those parishes where there was no intelligent Lady Bountiful, or active young clergyman to keep the teachers up to the mark, the parochial schools, as vehicles of instruction, must have been practically valueless. The children, in their quaint uniforms, made a pretty show at church on Sundays, their young untrained voices adding to the strength, if it increased the discordance of the singing; and probably on week days their general behaviour and habits were improved by the slender amount of school discipline to which they were subjected; but (judging by the revelations of a later time) there is reason to believe that very frequently they could neither write nor spell, and that their so-called reading was nothing better than repetition—a mere parrot-like effort of memory.

It might be naturally supposed that, as the funds of these schools increased through the interest accumulating from their endowments and rich bequests, the quality of their instruction would have improved, but the reverse took place. Their wealth furnished them with a means of support, and this told inevitably on the behaviour of the teachers, whose salaries remained the same whether their scholars were many or few. Still, despite their shortcomings and defects, parochial schools were in their day an agency for good. Apart from the actual learning they diffused, they broke the ice of that selfish indifference which

had long incased the rich with respect to the mental condition of the poor; and the attempts made to extend some degree of enlightenment not to boys only, but to girls also, proves, as I said before, that the intellectual capabilities of women were again acknowledged after a long eclipse—nay, more than this—for now, for the first time, they were acknowledged in reference to the poor, and not, as had hitherto been the case, with regard to *gentlewomen* alone.

But, during the latter half of the eighteenth century, a new educational agency was introduced, designed, in the first instance, perhaps, not merely to supplement, but to serve almost as a substitute for other elementary teaching; I refer, of course, to the formation of Sunday Schools. The first person who seems to have conceived the idea of gathering children and young people together for instruction on a Sunday was the Rev. Theophilus Lindsey, Vicar of Catherick, in Yorkshire—a living which, from conscientious reasons, he subsequently resigned. In 1763, some ten years before his secession from the Established Church, Mr. Lindsey adopted the plan on alternate Sunday afternoons of catechising the children of his parish, and of expounding the Bible to about a hundred boys belonging to a large school at that time existing in the village. During the latter part of the day, when evening service was over, he received classes in his own study; his wife, at the same time, instructing younger classes in an adjoining apartment. The example of these excellent people stimulated a warm personal friend of theirs—Miss Harrison, afterwards Mrs. Cappe—to attempt, in a neighbouring parish, the same good work. She established a sort of Sunday School, collecting in her back kitchen a number of poor children, whom she assisted in learning to read, teaching

them Dr. Watts' Hymns and his Shorter Catechism, and endeavouring to supply them with such general instruction as would lead them to some intelligent comprehension of the Bible. The "experiment," as she herself says, was quite new and by no means popular, as it was considered to savour of enthusiasm. She was regarded "as a fair mark for the shafts of ridicule;" yet her success was great, for her scholars became greatly attached to her, and their numbers increased so much that her humble school-premises were filled to overflowing. She avoided confusion, however, by judiciously dividing the children into classes, which succeeded each other in turn; and though the whole burthen of the teaching fell upon her—for she could not persuade any of the neighbouring young ladies to afford her the slightest help—she gained by degree much wholesome influence in the neighbourhood, securing for herself lasting satisfaction.

But hers was an isolated effort, and so also was that of Mr. Lindsey, and the credit of organising Sunday Schools on any systematic scale belongs, not to them, but to Robert Raikes, a printer in the town of Gloucester. He edited a periodical called the "Gloucester Journal," and in a number of this paper bearing the date of November 3rd, 1783, he states, that "wishing to remedy the evils resulting from the idleness into which so many of the poorer children were thrown on a Sunday, he had opened for them, upon that day, a free school, where they might be taught to read, be instructed in the Catechism, and be taken to Church."

Through means of his paper, Mr. Raikes was able to give great publicity to the work he was carrying on in Gloucester, and the increase of Sunday Schools became rapid. Before long, a Society was formed, and a subscription raised, headed by Queen Charlotte, for the purpose of establishing a Sunday School in every parish

throughout the kingdom. The clergy took an active part in the movement, which was aided also by the self-denying exertions of many benevolent ladies, to whose moral and religious sympathies it strongly appealed. The difficulties they had to encounter were frequently immense, as I shall endeavour to show by citing the case of the celebrated authoress, Mrs. Hannah More, whose experiences illustrate the educational condition of some, at least, of our rural districts towards the latter end of the last century.

Hannah More resided with her sisters at Cowslip Green, near Bristol, and united with them in the arduous task of establishing Sunday Schools in the surrounding villages, which were sunk in the lowest depths of ignorance and barbarism. They received in general no support whatever from the neighbouring farmers; some of these gravely prophesying that Sunday Schools would be the ruin of agriculture; while others, a trifle more enlightened, though absorbed only in their own interests, admitted that religious instruction might perhaps be beneficial in restraining children from robbing orchards! But, in the face alike of selfish indifference and active opposition, the Miss Mores continued their benevolent exertions, extending them far beyond their own neighbourhood, for some mining villages situated on the top of the Mendip Hills, especially attracted their attention. These they were courageous enough to visit, although they were warned by their friends that by so doing, they might endanger their lives, as the inhabitants were fierce and disorderly to such an extreme, that no constable dared to discharge among them the duties of his office. Of any thing approaching to education they were absolutely ignorant, and at first they regarded Hannah More and her sisters with distrust and suspicion, perplexed by, and disposed to resent their interference, and even apprehending in them a

design to carry away their children to sell them as slaves. Apparently, however, they gradually yielded to their good influence, for the Miss Mores actually succeeded in establishing Sunday Schools in ten of the surrounding parishes where there was no resident clergyman, and by this means they obtained supervision over about twelve hundred children.

Nor did their zeal stop here; in the small town of Cheddar, as well as in the mining villages, their work was eminently successful. Cheddar was at that time remarkable for its mental and moral degradation; and Hannah More, writing of it to Mr. Wilberforce, says, "that after carefully inspecting the whole parish, which numbered about two thousand inhabitants, she had found in only one house a Bible, and that this was used for propping up a flower-pot!" The Sunday services were conducted by a clergyman who lived near Wells, six or eight miles distant, and who rode into town to do duty every Sunday; but his congregation was so small that eight in the morning and twenty in the afternoon was rather above than below the ordinary number. The parishioners were generally very poor, and the few wealthy farmers who resided in the environs were hard, brutal, ignorant, and of course opposed to education. But, notwithstanding all these depressing circumstances, Mrs. More and the sister who accompanied her, pursued their work with undaunted spirit, and at length contrived to interest in their favour a farmer's wife, a woman of some good sense and intelligence. She allowed them to have, at a low rent, the only house to be let in the parish, and this they were able to turn to good account as it possessed an adjoining cow-shed, which, on being roofed in and supplied with windows, served as a modest school-room. "On a fixed day, of which I had given notice in the

church," says Hannah More, in the letter before quoted, "every woman with her children above six years old met us. We took an exact list from their account, and engaged a hundred and twenty to attend on the following Sunday. A great many refused to send their children unless we would pay for them, and not a few refused because they were in doubt of our intentions, fearing that at the end of seven years, if they attended so long, I should acquire a power over them and send them beyond sea." Mrs. More adds, she must have heard this with her own ears in order to believe it possible that such ignorance could have existed out of Africa.

She then gives Mr. Wilberforce a detailed description of the teachers she had engaged for her school. Voluntary teachers in such a town as Cheddar could not be procured, but she obtained the services of two valuable women, and with their help succeeded in establishing, in addition to the Sunday School, a week-day-school, for the purpose of instructing thirty girls in reading, sewing, and knitting.

During the first year or so these devoted women had to struggle against every kind of opposition. The persecutions of the wealthy farmers seem to have been especially annoying. Conscious of their own dense ignorance, they dreaded and jealously resented every attempt to ameliorate the intellectual condition of those over whom they ruled as with a rod of iron. One farmer, possessing an income of a thousand a year, took care to inform Mrs. More that she should not come to his place to make his ploughmen wiser than himself; while his wife, equally narrow-minded, declared, that in her opinion "the lower orders were *fated* to be poor, ignorant, and wicked." Nevertheless, the good work was carried on with praiseworthy perseverance; and

Hannah More, writing about it five years after its commencement, speaks hopefully of the progress made. To the Sunday School a religious service had been added, and this, she says, was attended regularly by two hundred children consisting of her elder scholars; which leads us to imagine that the numbers connected with her school must by that time have been considerable, though she does not give us their actual amount.

Thus through the medium, primarily, of Sunday School instruction, a little light had been let into a most benighted district. We must not over-estimate the value of that light; considering the very small staff of teachers (two persons only apparently being employed), it could not be otherwise than dim, particularly if we look upon it from an intellectual point of view. Yet, when the poor of Cheddar had discovered the folly and absurdity of their own prejudices and fears, it must have had on them a softening, civilizing effect to find that educated women took a genuine interest in their children's welfare. And in naming this, we have probably named one of the greatest benefits conferred upon the poor through the establishment of these early Sunday Schools. They helped to bridge over the wide gulf which had hitherto divided class from class, to bring the higher classes into contact with the lower, and in this way to reveal to the former the intellectual, moral, and religious faculties existing in the latter, though often in a dormant state through want of cultivation.

Few persons had the energy and ability, and indeed the pecuniary means, to attempt, as Mrs. Hannah More did, the mental and spiritual elevation of whole villages and towns, but, in a humbler way, the work of education, through the aid of Sunday Schools, continued to prosper. Its field of operations

extended, and according to a rough estimate, not, as Mr. Bartley informs us,* to be entirely relied upon, the number of children attending schools of this class throughout England and Wales, had, by the close of the eighteenth century, attained nearly to half a million. Considering the then recent establishment of Sunday Schools, this number appears almost incredibly large, but it must be borne in mind that such schools, when they once became popular, could be set on foot with comparative ease. An active clergyman, or Dissenting minister, could generally depend on being able to gather round him a glad band of teachers who gave their services for nothing. His vestry served perhaps as a school-room, and as little was taught beyond the Bible, the expense of providing books and other school apparatus was necessarily very small. Considering too how many poor children were left absolutely without any species of week-day instruction, we cannot wonder that these schools should have been well attended, since they often afforded their scholars the only chance of picking up a few crumbs of knowledge.

The efforts made by the Christian Knowledge Society in the establishment of parish schools had not been limited to this country alone, they extended also to Scotland and Ireland. In Scotland they seem to have been particularly successful. John Howard, the Philanthropist, mentions in an Educational Report of 1787, that there were then about 7,000 children attending schools set on foot by that Society, and receiving in them instruction in reading, writing and arithmetic. These schools were generally situated in the Highlands, for, in the Lowlands, parochial schools existed, affording even to the poorest parents

* Schools for the People.

the opportunity of giving their children a good education. Howard states that the Society had appointed an Inspector to visit the Highland schools, and that this gentleman, in the course of two visitations—made in 1771 and 1772—had collected much curious and interesting information with regard to the general condition of the people. He adds, that in consequence of their Inspector's report, the Society had thought fit to revive an old, and as it seems to us, very singular rule—that of making its schools *ambulatory*. In order to diffuse the benefits of education over as wide an area as possible, it was ordained that no school of this class should remain in any one spot for more than three years, but at the end of that time should be removed to some other neighbourhood, wherever the Society thought proper to appoint. The exact advantages accruing from a regulation, which must have had a very unsettling effect, it is difficult to understand, and probably its revival was not of long continuance. That it should have come into operation at all, proves, however, that the provision for education was below the requirements of the Highlanders, although it was relatively far superior to that existing among the agricultural population of England. Doubtless the Scotch educational system was from many points defective, possessing in even an aggravated form the faults which were certainly conspicuous in it some sixty years later. The discipline practised in the schools was severe, and the subjects taught were very limited, while the Bible was degraded into serving as the one task book, the medium through which a knowledge of the very alphabet was imparted, and as such associated too often with blows and tears. Yet notwithstanding these defects—which if very glaring would assuredly not have escaped the notice of so acute and impartial an observer as Howard

we may safely conclude from his testimony that Scotland still occupied a higher position than that of the sister country with regard to the general education of her people.

Some slight allusion has already been made to the peculiar difficulties besetting elementary education in Ireland. Here, the influence exerted by the Christian Knowledge Society does not seem to have been very perceptible, a circumstance easily to be accounted for, when we bear in mind that this Society as yet but imperfectly recognized the principle of religious liberty. No expedient like that of the Conscience Clause had been devised, perhaps it had hardly even entered into the imagination of the most enlightened as a distant possibility; and education to the people at large, meant conversion to Protestantism.

Just at this time, also, it happened that the Catholics were particularly oppressed. The Battle of the Boyne, the Siege of Derry, had left some stinging memories behind, and a liberal-minded Protestant king passed laws which seemed almost to suggest that he was anxious to wreak vengeance on the Papists of Ireland for the cruelties endured by the Huguenots of France. In a Catholic country it was made "highly penal for a Catholic to teach," "highly penal for a Catholic to be taught," except indeed at a Protestant school, or at home by the members of his own family, and the "poor natives," as they were called, clinging blindly to their priestly directors, chose to remain in the grossest ignorance, rather than adopt a faith which would, in their belief, imperil their souls.

In the reign of Anne, and George I., a *laissez aller* system seems to have prevailed to a great extent with regard to Irish education. Matters were acknowledged to be bad, and the blame was cast on the barbarism of the people, but no attempts were

made to dispel the prevailing darkness until the year 1731, when it began to excite no small degree of public attention. In the belief that they had devised a remedy, the dignitaries of the church drew up a petition, praying the king—George II.—to grant a Charter, incorporating certain persons to receive gifts, benefactions, and lands for the support and maintenance of schools where the children of the poor might be taught gratis. The petition, after stating that in the Provinces of Leinster, Munster, and Connaught the Papists far exceeded the Protestants in number, added, that the creating in these places of Protestant schools, was absolutely necessary for their “*conversion*,” and that as the English parish schools already established were not sufficient “for the purpose,” it was essential that some other plan of education should be found.

In compliance with the request contained in this petition, a Charter was formed, empowering the Archbishops and Bishops, and also the leading officers of the State, to receive donations for the establishment of schools, and the education of poor Papists and other “natives.” The 6th February, 1733, witnessed the opening of this celebrated Charter, and in the course of the following year, in the county of Kildare, the first Charter School was established. Other schools were added by degrees, as the funds at the disposal of the Charter Society would admit, and by the year 1769 the whole number of these schools amounted to fifty-two, with the addition of five “nurseries,” accommodation being thus provided, it was computed, for 2,100 children. The Society does not appear at first to have contemplated the expense of boarding and clothing its scholars. It purposed merely to afford them instruction in English, and in the fundamental principles of the Protestant religion. Soon, however, it became

evident that home and priestly influence counteracted all the effect of Protestant training, and it was therefore deemed expedient to turn the Charter Schools into boarding schools, within whose walls the children were to be immured, and kept rigidly apart from their parents and friends during the whole time of their education.

It is stated, indeed, to have formed part of the plan adopted by the Society, to contrive the removal of its scholars to districts as remote as possible from their own homes, in order that they might be separated entirely from their families, and it was expressly ordained that "no Popish priest," or "*relation*," or person unknown, should be suffered to speak to the children, except in the presence of their schoolmaster or mistress.

Although it is easy to perceive, from the wording of the Charter, that it was granted originally with the view of promoting education among the *Protestant* as well as the *Catholic* poor, the proselytising zeal of the Society was such, that in 1775 it passed a resolution which, for a long time, made it conditional that every child entering a Charter School should be a Catholic.

As parents could not, of course, be compelled to part with their children on the terms described above, we can easily suppose that, in all ordinary cases, nothing but the pressure of extreme poverty would induce them to do so. Accordingly we find that as early as 1757 the numbers were not well maintained, and the Society resolved, in consequence, to build "nurseries," where infant children—orphans or foundlings, chiefly, we presume—might in the first instance be received, to be transferred from thence, when old enough, to the regular Charter Schools. In this way it was hoped that a constant supply of scholars would be kept up to fill

the vacant places left by those who, as soon as their school course was finished, were sent out into the world.

Nothing is known concerning these schools until they attracted the attention of the indefatigable Mr. Howard, who visited them in the year 1784 apparently,* repeating his visit three years later. He became, by this means thoroughly well acquainted with them, and able to give of them a particular account. They were then 38 in number, and were supposed to support 2,100 children, but not more than 1,400 could be produced. Their general condition seemed to him most deplorable; indeed, the details furnished by his report imply a state of things too bad for ordinary description. A few examples I shall, however, give to serve as illustrations, first mentioning by way of explanation that the schools, established in different districts, appear to have consisted of either boys or girls, and that the children of both sexes spent their time principally in spinning flax. The ordinary salary of the schoolmaster or schoolmistress—whichever it might be—was six pounds (Irish) a year, allowance being made to these teachers for their own and their pupils' board. Out of the work done by the pupils, they were permitted to make a profit, in some cases, apparently, paying back to the Society a half-penny a day for the earnings of each child. It became therefore their interest to extort from them as much labour as possible.

Of Lantry school, Howard relates that it contained forty-two girls, and that the master and mistress, while receiving a salary, were required to pay for work done by three-fourths of the children. This school he visited twice, and on the occasion of his

* There is a little confusion with regard to the precise date of Howard's visit, but not more than that of a year.

second visit he found that a deterioration had taken place in the management. No attention was paid to order and regularity, even at meals, and young girls from fifteen to eighteen years of age, were placed out in the world at the end of their school course, very ill-informed in every respect, several of them being unable to read.

But this is one of the least appalling of his revelations. In many, nay, most of the schools, every sanitary law was set at defiance, the most necessary repairs were neglected, whitewash was never applied, and the children, as a natural consequence, were pale, sickly, and diseased. In a school consisting of forty girls—whom Howard describes as dirty, miserable-looking objects—the children were spinning and knitting in a cold room, paved with pebbles. An usher was standing over them with a rod in his hand to compel them to work, but their education appeared to be totally neglected, as not a book was to be seen about the premises. In this case the mistress was addicted to drinking, but its wretchedness was by no means without a parallel, as will be seen by another instance, that of a boys' school. Here the children—thirty-three in number—were destitute of shoes and stockings, and were literally clothed in rags. Their whole appearance denoted the grossest neglect, and possibly on this account they had not been taken to church for many months. They were provided with an usher, in addition, we may suppose, to the schoolmaster, but they were very ignorant, and their dwelling-house, it is almost needless to say, was "out of repair," dirty and dilapidated doubtless to the last extreme.

The same tale is told of other schools, but to multiply illustrations would be mere waste of words. Enough has already been said to give some faint idea of the squalor, the misery, the state

of mental and moral stagnation in which the children belonging to these Charter Schools were, with a very few exceptions, suffered to remain. Their position must, in many respects, have resembled that of factory children, whose case excited, at a later date, so much deserved commiseration. Like them, they toiled under the eye of severe taskmasters, who did not scruple to goad them on to their daily work by continual appeals to their sense of fear. Active ill-treatment Howard does not seem to have witnessed. It was not practised in his presence, but that it existed we have ample proof in the reports made at a later time, the result of information elicited from the scholars themselves. He saw quite enough, however, to arouse his indignation, and although his inspection appears to have been received with great indifference on the part of the public in general, it had the effect of inducing the Irish House of Commons to enquire into the existing condition of the Protestant Charter Schools.

A Committee was appointed and Howard examined before it, which gave him an opportunity of reiterating his statements. He boldly said, that in his opinion the school houses were going to ruin, and the school children in general such miserable objects that they were a disgrace to all society, declaring that he had arrived at this conviction in consequence of the investigations in which he had been engaged. Such an assertion could hardly be popular. It was listened to probably with reluctant, half incredulous ears, and with a belief more or less openly expressed, that the zeal of the philanthropist was carrying him too far. Some wondered, perhaps, that he should concern himself so much on behalf of Irish children; and others, while agreeing with him in the main, were surprised that he, strict Noncon-

formist as he was, should not show a little more leniency towards schools so exclusively *Protestant* in their character.

But Howard's religion, like his philanthropy, was of far too high and pure a kind to pervert or cripple his judgment, and he recognised the evils that lay at *the root* of the Charter School system, as well as those that merely accompanied its development. In the recognition of the true principle of religious liberty he seems to have been as far in advance of his age, as he was in his appreciation of the homely virtues of soap and white-wash, and he appends to his report the following remarkable words: "I cannot help expressing a wish that the benefits of education were more extended over Ireland than they are by these schools. If free schools were instituted in every parish for instruction in the lower parts of learning, and in the principles of morality, for the children of each sex and of all persuasions, it would perhaps more than anything tend to soften the manners of the Irish poor. The lower class of Irish are by no means averse to the improvement of their children. At the cabins by the roadside I saw several schools in which, for the payment of 3s. 3d. (Irish money) a quarter, children were instructed in reading, writing, and accounts. Some of these I examined, and found them much forwarder than children of the same age in the Charter Schools. They were clean and wholesome, and consisted of the children of both Catholic and Protestant parents. I hope I shall not be thought, as a Protestant Dissenter, indifferent to the Protestant cause, if I express my wish that these distinctions were less regarded in bestowing the advantages of education, and that the increase in Protestantism were trusted merely to the dissemination of knowledge and sound morals."

We cannot but suppose that few indeed of Howard's contem-

poraries endorsed such sentiments as these, when we know that here, in our own country, many able and learned men yet living amongst us held up the "Conscience Clause" to scorn and reprobation.* Howard's examination before the Parliamentary Committee led to but little result, and even had his life been prolonged to old age he would very likely have supposed that his inspection of the Charter Schools had failed in its object. The evils he desired to see remedied were suffered to remain in much of their original force; indeed, it appears that no very marked improvement ever took place in the schools up to the time of their dissolution, which occurred long after his own death. Yet the wish he expresses at the close of his report has won its way towards complete fulfilment, as I shall be able to point out when I turn to this subject again.

The education of the poor has latterly been engrossing much of our attention, and we have tried to realise its actual condition a hundred years ago. But before quitting the eighteenth century I must note the improvements which had since its commencement taken place in the education of the higher and middle classes.

Mental cultivation was no longer forbidden to women with the same sternness that it had been formerly; yet the prejudice to which I have alluded existed in very many quarters at least during the first fifty years of the century. Mrs. Cappe (mentioned before in connection with Sunday School work) speaks in her memoirs as having suffered from it personally. Her father, a country clergyman, possessing himself some literary taste, discountenanced rather than encouraged her wish for intellectual improvement, and took every opportunity of asserting in her

* See "Notes of my Life," by Archdeacon Dennison.

presence, that domestic occupations and household duties were the proper—he meant of course the *one only*—province of women. Her mother, though the granddaughter of a wealthy baronet, and accustomed in her youth to associate with persons in high position, was absolutely incapable of instructing her daughter, for her own education had been so utterly neglected, that her ability to read even a chapter in the Bible, or write a common letter, was owing entirely to her own industry! Female education seems indeed to have been discouraged, on principle, by all the branches of the family, and Mrs. Cappe, in her early girlhood, was seriously warned against spending her time in reading,—alarm being expressed if she merely took up a magazine volume.

This, considering the social position of the parties, was doubtless an extreme instance, for the extraordinary dread in which “learned ladies” had been held, had passed its zenith and was beginning to decline. It could scarcely be otherwise, since many accomplished women had risen, and by direct or indirect methods, were advocating the rights of their sex to education. Mrs. Elizabeth Carter was distinguished for the profundity of even her classical attainments, and Mrs. Hannah More, when drawing in her “Cælebs” the picture of a pattern young lady—the very quintessence of modesty and propriety—allows her to be well acquainted with Latin, though the fair Lucretia will not own it except with blushes and perturbation!

Granting, however, that a knowledge of Latin was still very generally supposed to foster unfeminine qualities in women, there is reason to believe that the modern languages were, in their case, coming again into favour. German was almost unknown, but the place it now holds in female education was then, to a certain de-

gree, occupied by Italian, and in a few boarding-schools of a higher class, French was now taught systematically—really sound and grammatical French—not French after the manner of “Stratford-atte-Bow.” The use of the globes seems to have formed in these schools a part of the ordinary course of study, but judging from the specimens of their performances which our great-grandmothers have handed down to us, their comprehension of the *Fine Arts* was not great. Backboards, stocks, and other implements of torture were freely used to force young ladies into deporting themselves gracefully, and they received instruction in dancing from a master who accompanied his directions with performances on the violin or kit, the bow of which served him also as an instrument of correction, for he would apply it to the feet of awkward or refractory pupils, occasionally breaking it through the vigour of his blows.*

That the use of the globes should have been taught to girls appears remarkable, when we consider the great ignorance prevailing on the subject of geography, an ignorance which apparently distinguished English education. In the variety of their instruction, the French decidedly surpassed us at that period, and in proof of this I may cite the instance of two very excellent educational books, written by a French lady,† for the benefit of young English ladies of rank. They were published in London (where their author seems to have resided) twelve years or more before the commencement of the French Revolution, and they contain some very intelligent attempts to impart a

* A fact.

† “*Le Magazin des Enfants*,” and “*Le Magazin des Adolescentes*,” by Madame Leprince de Beaumont.

knowledge of geography and history, and even of the general principles of physiology. Their moral teaching, too, is essentially sound and good, going far deeper than that mere *surface gloss* which pervades the educational system of Madame de Genles. Yet from the works of the latter we certainly might discover that among the higher classes at least, education was less limited in its scope in France than in England, and therefore better calculated to awaken interest, and arouse the intellectual faculties into action.

The improvements which had taken place with regard to the education of girls since the commencement of the century, was more marked than any occurring in the teaching and training of boys. Yet we may hope that the severe discipline, popular in Dr. Johnson's boyhood, was gradually giving way to somewhat milder methods, and that school-life was less hard than it had been formerly. The following words, written by a gentleman, long deceased, who in the year 1785 was sent to a rather celebrated boarding-school at Brixton—a favourable specimen of its class—will afford us some idea of the education imparted to boys belonging to the upper-middle ranks of society. "Our physical comforts," he says, "were well attended to, and the modicum of learning doled out to us, was acquired without any discouraging difficulty. The amount of learning imparted to us, or which, I at least (in the course of seven years) acquired, consisted of indifferent reading, vile writing, a very limited knowledge of arithmetic, and sufficient Latin to construe a few lines of that language. French, indeed, was taught by a resident master, but I fear we spoke it neither with a pure accent nor strict attention to grammar. Geography and history were hardly considered as necessary acquirements."

Now, if we compare this school with any fairly well conducted

school of the present day, and perceive, as we must, how very scanty the teaching was, we shall wonder at the *prestige* which beyond all question it long enjoyed, for we must bear in mind that it was a school of a higher class, designed in the phraseology of the time, for "the education of young noblemen and gentlemen." Yet, even here, in the attention paid to the physical comforts of the boys, as well as in the apparent absence of harsh and oppressive modes of discipline, we discern some signs of progress, some proof that the young were beginning to be treated with a certain degree of consideration, no longer as if they were "mad"—fit objects for the restraints and severities that once distinguished Bedlam.

But leaving now the illustrations in which I have been indulging, I revert again to the education of the poor, having much to say respecting the condition of elementary schools at the commencement of the present century. The Parochial Schools, as I said before, had declined in power, but such as they were, they undoubtedly paved the way for schools conducted under the monitorial system which was introduced by Dr. Bell and Joseph Lancaster.

The stir, the excitement, the contentions which the promulgation of this system caused in the educational world, it is difficult for us at the present day to understand. That the elder and better informed scholars should lighten the labours of the schoolmaster or schoolmistress, by taking in turns the supervision of such classes as they were competent to manage, would seem, in the face of it, a simple plan to have devised—requiring no very especial acuteness or cleverness. Yet the respective partisans of Bell and Lancaster showed much anxiety in claiming for each the merit of having invented the system, and in their zeal they, per-

haps, over shot their mark, for amid the conflicting evidence, it is impossible now to ascertain to which the palm should be awarded. No doubt the rivals, if such they may be called, were perfectly correct in declaring that their plans had been thought out in complete independence of each other. But there is nothing remarkable in this, for many scientific discoveries have been made independently and yet simultaneously. It was stated, indeed, before the Committee of the House of Commons in the year 1835, that a school conducted on the monitorial system was opened in Aldgate in 1788, and this statement, if reliable, would prove that neither Bell nor Lancaster actually originated the system, since it was tried a little time before they commenced their work. But wherever the truth may lie, the invention has always been attributed to them, and it has led to results no less important than the establishment of two Societies, very prominent in the history of education. It deserves, therefore, some attention.

Dr. Bell, a Prebendary of Westminster Abbey, went out to Madras in the year 1789, being there appointed Chaplain to Fort St. George, and Minister to an adjacent church. The Military Male Orphan Asylum excited in him much interest, and possessing, it would seem, a genius for teaching, he undertook its superintendence, giving his services gratuitously, and introducing into the school the monitorial, or, as it was afterwards called, in compliment to himself, the *Madras* method of education. This method may be briefly described as consisting of a division of scholars into classes, each class to be instructed by an elder scholar, subject, of course, to a presiding head. When the advantages of the system became known, it met with marked success, and in 1797 Dr. Bell returned to England to introduce it to

his native country. He published a pamphlet on the subject, entitled, "An Experiment in Education, made at the Male Asylum at Madras, suggesting a system by which a school or family may teach itself, under the superintendence of the master or parent;" words which we can well imagine must have conveyed to many the idea that he really had discovered the royal road to learning. His School Report was submitted to high authorities in the Church and State, and, according to a contemporary writer, he became regarded as one of the greatest benefactors of the human race. Possessing, as a clergyman of good position, considerable influence over the members of his own church, his zeal communicated itself to many, and the "National Society," of which I shall have hereafter occasion to speak, certainly owes to him its origin. In all the schools which this Society established, the Madras methods of teaching were, from the very beginning, adopted. They continued until the Government code produced in them considerable modifications, but traces of them may be found in the elementary, and particularly the Church schools of the present day.

Dr. Bell had, however, as I before have intimated, a rival in Joseph Lancaster, a member of the Society of Friends. In 1798, just after the publication of Dr. Bell's Report, though, as he maintained, in complete independence of it, Lancaster opened a school, nearly opposite the site of the present Borough Road Schools, of which indeed it was the parent. Here he seems, for the first time, to have tried the monitorial system, which among *his* partisans was afterwards called by his name. It differed in no respect from that of Dr. Bell, except in a point of religious divergence. Bell insisted that in his schools the religious instruction should be based strictly on the principles of the Church of

England, whereas Lancaster desired that some degree of freedom should be allowed in this matter, and that the Scriptures alone should serve as a standard of doctrine. Hence he was naturally patronized chiefly by the Nonconforming party, and Bell, just as naturally, by members of the Established Church.

Lancaster, though not famous for worldly wisdom, seems to have possessed great aptitude for teaching, and the news of his success spread far and wide. His methods were new, and when, during a season of scarcity, he thought fit to remit altogether the school fees, his school became full to overflowing.

Funds were, of course, required now for the maintenance of his scheme, but so long as he confined his efforts within reasonable limits, he seems to have enjoyed a fair amount of support. A subscription list was opened, and noblemen, royal dukes, and even the king himself, joined the number of his subscribers. It must be remembered, also, that his expenses were small, for the monitorial system, as at first devised, had this great recommendation—it compressed the apparatus required for education into the smallest possible compass. Lancaster, indeed, estimated it as below any attainable mark. Judging by his own experience, which was surely exceptional, he was sanguine enough to imagine, that through means of a proper division into classes, a school containing a thousand scholars might be efficiently conducted under one master! He went still further, calculating at one time (for afterwards he apparently modified his views) that on the system of mutual instruction, a school consisting of three hundred children might be carried on at the rate of seven shillings a year for each child.

But his *enthusiasm of education*, if it may so be called, made him guilty of other extravagances into which it seems surprising

that an experienced teacher could fall. He fancied, for instance, that reading-sheets printed in large type and pasted on the walls of a school-room, so that they might be read by many eyes at once, would serve as *one book* for each member of the whole school. He likewise suggested a plan whereby a class of five hundred children might be taught simultaneously by one monitor! Presupposing in this very hypothetical monitor the most marvellous powers of voice, he recommended that he should stand at the head of his class, and spell out a series of words, which were to be repeated after him, one by one, by the whole class, who should write down on their slates—at the same moment of time—every word as soon as they had spelt it. By this means he reckoned that about a hundred words might be learned and written in the course of a morning! How the little learners were to be guided in their attempts to form their letters he does not say, nor give any hint as to the manner in which their attention was to be maintained under a system of teaching so dry and mechanical. Certainly, if we can suppose him to have himself adopted it, and to have found that his scholars were duly obedient to their monitor, and able, also, under circumstances so disadvantageous, to keep to their own work, and to refrain from hindering very seriously the work of their neighbours, we are forced to conclude that boys at the beginning of the century were either subdued and spiritless, or in moral and mental capacities greatly superior to those we see around us now.

From 1807 to 1810 Lancaster continued to superintend the Borough Road School, but he was also much occupied in travelling from place to place, delivering lectures, and endeavouring to extend a knowledge of his system. In 1808 he journeyed 1,028 miles, starting 22 schools with 3,650 pupils; and in 1809, 1,324

miles, starting 15 schools with 6,150 pupils.* In 1811 he visited Ireland, but his visit does not seem to have led to much result, though from the circumstance of his having published, some years previously, a letter addressed to the Right Hon. John Foster, on the "Best means of Educating and Employing the Poor in Ireland," it appears not improbable that the reports which had reached him of the Charter Schools, had at one time engaged his attention.

It is melancholy to have to record, that the closing part of this remarkable man's public career was somewhat clouded. He had thrown himself with such ardour into his educational schemes, and in their prosecution had incurred such heavy expense, that eventually he became involved in great pecuniary difficulties, and, except for the intervention of a wealthy friend, might have been cast into a debtor's prison. But he was rescued from so sad a fate, and for a while longer pursued his work, watching, surely, with deep interest the formation of the "British and Foreign School Society," called originally "The Royal Lancasterian Institution," in compliment to himself. In 1814, however, disliking the rather subordinate position in which, through the force of circumstances, he had been placed, he resigned his charge of the Borough Road School, and renounced all connection with the Society that he had taken so active a part in creating. Four years afterwards he sailed for America, never to return to England again; but often—before he met with the street accident that caused his death—his heart must, we think, have been cheered by news of the increasing numbers and prosperity of the British

* Bartley's "Schools for the People."

Schools, in whose welfare, as offspring of his own, he must always have felt a lively interest.

And a similar satisfaction for a similar cause had Dr. Bell; he, too, witnessed the success of his plans. But the latter years of his life were not eventful, nor does it come within my province to trace them out. He died at Cheltenham in 1832, and received interment in Westminster Abbey—a proof, if any were needed, of the high estimation in which his system of education was held by his contemporaries, and of the vast amount of good it was known to have effected throughout the land.

The rivalry I have spoken of as subsisting between the followers of Bell and Lancaster, did not wholly cease with the retirement of either from public life. It was transferred—very inoffensively and very naturally—to the two Societies of which they had been the founders, the National and the British and Foreign School Society. The last named takes precedence—though by a few months only—in point of time, for Lord Brougham, who was much connected with it in its early days, gives distinct testimony to that effect.* We learn from him that it was formally established in 1809, and in complete working order in 1810, the year in which the National Society was first organized. It is hardly necessary to say that the points of religious divergence which distinguished the systems of Bell and Lancaster, were perpetuated in these Societies with the result before noticed, the one being supported chiefly by the Church party, the other by the Nonconformists. But this, instead of narrowing, widened their field of usefulness, and Mr. Bartley speaking of them says, “that for nearly thirty years—that is, from

* See “Parliamentary Report on Education,” 1834.

1808* to 1834"—they formed "almost the only leading features in the chronicles of education among the working classes of England. Such a statement affords evidence of the value of their work, and that there existed an urgent need of it is sufficiently attested by a startling fact, established through means of Parliamentary inquiry, viz., that in the year 1816 no less than 130,000 children within the area of London, Southwark, and Westminster were unprovided with any means of education."

If we consider the general nature of the schools which the two Societies set on foot, our first feeling, perhaps, will be that of disappointment. The system of Bell and Lancaster had tended, indeed to smooth down one great mountain of difficulty that lies in the pathway of national as of all other education—the difficulty of expense. It had minimized the cost involved in the payment of teachers by the extensive employment of monitors. The latter, who were under no necessity of going through any training, appear occasionally to have received from the school-master or managers, a few pence; but often, no doubt, they gave their services gratuitously, contented to do so for the sake of being "dressed in a little brief authority," which raised them above their fellows. It was, however, simply impossible that they could, except in the rarest cases, make good teachers. In patience, in perseverance, they must have failed, as a general rule, and even when they possessed these qualities—so seldom to be found in the young—their necessary want of general information precluded them from illustrating intelligently any lesson they might happen to convey; it became therefore a mere mechanical

* There is a trifling error here. The National Society was not formed till 1810.

exercise—frequently valueless. That the monitors should themselves be trained, formed no part of the original system, nor does the practice appear to have commenced till 1834, when experience had taught its necessity. We may consequently conclude that prior to that time, unless the presiding head were Argus'-eyed, and possessed of extraordinary activity and power, no small portion of the school hours must have been frittered away in *playing* merely at teaching and learning, especially where the attendance was numerous, and the younger classes large in proportion.

To our modern ideas, also, the course of instruction prevalent at least in the National Schools—the British ranked somewhat higher—appears very limited. Against writing, a singular prejudice still existed among certain educationalists of the older and more rigid type. Dr. Pole, who was in favour of its being taught to utterly uninstructed children in Sunday Schools, takes the trouble to argue with all gravity that they were not likely to acquire, by this means, sufficient freedom with their pens to enable them to commit forgery! It is evident then, that consequences of a very dire kind were occasionally apprehended from a knowledge of the writing character on the part of the poor. Generally speaking, however, the objection raised took a less preposterous, and we may add, more selfish form: it was said, with respect to girls especially, that if they entered domestic service able to understand writing, they might be tempted, perhaps, to pry into their master's letters, and thus to become acquainted with his secrets! Such being the state of opinion, which still not uncommonly prevailed, we cannot be surprised that writing, though insisted on by Dr. Bell, was not invariably taught in all the National Schools established in rural districts. Some schools were at times so poor that they could not afford to furnish apparatus—

even to the extent of buying slates—and therefore the children were unable to learn, but in some, undoubtedly, they were prevented from learning by the reasons above described. Arithmetic we are told was usually taught in every National School, but geography seems to have found no place in the instruction given in even the Central School of the Society, for we find that maps were there introduced for the first time about forty years ago.*

Reading, spelling, and repetition of the Catechism served to fill up the greater portion of the scholar's time, the attempts made to explain or diversify the teaching being few and far between, and known only, we may fairly conclude, to those higher classes that were under the master's immediate eye. Some experience of the matter, enables me to say with confidence, that such attempts *must* necessarily have been absent from monitorial instruction. And herein lies, I think, the great objection to the systems both of Bell and Lancaster. It was not recognized apparently at the time, perhaps happily so, or it might have hindered the spread of schools which, with all their faults, have been productive of such a vast amount of good.

That the National Schools were steadily progressive in point of numbers will appear from the following statistics.† In 1813 they are said to have amounted to 230, with an attendance of 40,484 children; in 1817 to 725, with an attendance of 117,000 children; and in 1820 to 1,614, with an attendance of rather more than 200,000 children. The statistics of the British Schools at precisely the same period I have not been able to ascertain,

* A map of the Holy Land had been allowed to be used previously to that time, apparently.

† Their accuracy seems, however, doubted by Lord Brougham. See Parliamentary Report, 1834.

but these schools seem also to have increased satisfactorily, though not with the same rapidity. In 1817 there were in England 260 British Schools, and their number had risen in 1827 to about 400. To foster the growth of both, but especially, perhaps, that of the National Schools, a new educational scheme now came into action—the establishment of schools for infants.

The honour of having originated this movement was claimed by Lord Brougham. His words (uttered before the Committee of the House of Commons in 1834) are emphatic. “I have noticed,” he says, speaking of the National in reference to the British and Foreign School Society, “the same disposition to follow in our footsteps in other matters, as in that of Infant Schools, which were begun in 1818 by myself and a few friends”—James Mill, father of the celebrated John Stuart Mill, was among the number—“and afterwards taken up by the Established Church.” He then mentions that the school he had founded was at Brewer’s Green, Westminster, and that in his belief it was the first that this island, or even the world, had ever witnessed; adding, that the Infant Schools established by Robert Owen and M. Fellenberg—which had given the original idea—were connected with factories, whereas the Brewer’s Green School was a simple Day School, the children being neither fed nor in any way helped, except by instruction and training.

Robert Owen, to whom Lord Brougham refers in the above remarks, established a school for little children at his Cotton Mills at New Lanark, and both he and Mr. Wilderspin laid claim to the merit of having originated the Infant School system, but it appears that some hints had been derived from the celebrated Swiss teacher Pestalozzi. Pestalozzi, who died very early in the century, was an educational reformer in the truest sense of

the term. He did not, like Bell and Lancaster, merely organize a new method of conveying the elements of instruction, he went deeper than this; he sought to bring out the latent powers already existing in the minds of his scholars, and thus to enable them to assimilate the knowledge he imparted—to appropriate it as *something belonging to them*,—not as *something put into them*, and capable therefore of being discarded with ease and pleasure. To quote from a brief summary given of his principles, he considered “that education relates to the whole man, and consists in the drawing forth, strengthening and perfecting all the faculties with which an all-wise Creator has endowed him.” In his opinion, “education had to do with the hand, the head, and the heart.” He regarded simple skill in reading, writing, and other acquirements, as quite subordinate to the effect they produced on the mind itself; and whatever may be thought of certain ramifications of his system, mere incidents in its development, there can be no question that the idea which lies at its root is unassailable, and that it might with great advantage have borne a more conspicuous part in education. Traces of it may, however, be found in all the better conducted schools of the present day, and it doubtless influenced, consciously or unconsciously, the teaching in the Infant School established at New Lanark. In this school, the master, Mr. Buchanan, endeavoured to combine instruction with amusement, and when he afterwards became the head of Brewer’s Green School we may conclude he there pursued the same method.

But if such were the case, the Brewer’s Green School must have been far superior to the generality of those that followed it. The conductors of the earliest Infant Schools were persons actuated by a sincere love of their work; they had taken it up

from a pure feeling of preference, but when it came to be regarded as a mere mode of obtaining a livelihood, demanding no aptitudes of a peculiar kind, a deterioration of course was soon apparent in its quality. Teachers frequently offered themselves who were quite unfitted for the charge of infants, yet they had to be accepted *faut de mieux*, for no means of training as yet existed, no tests were required that would tend to winnow the wheat from the chaff.

The want of good teachers was felt as a continual evil until 1836, when the Home and Colonial School Society—called, at its outset, *Infant School Society*,—opened a College “for qualifying young persons, ‘apt to teach,’ as Infant Schoolmasters and mistresses.” That it immediately effected much good cannot be doubted, but, unfortunately, it was at its commencement too much disposed to favour the already prevalent practice of using the Bible as a task-book for infants, and forcing Scripture into the whole course of their daily instruction, at times by methods painfully grotesque. It was even asserted by one gentleman, a member of the Society, that every lesson should bear, directly or indirectly, on the Bible; so that if such a subject were chosen for an object-lesson as a flower—an excellent opening certainly for a few words on Natural Religion,—the children (*little children*, we must remember, under seven years of age probably) were to be taught to recall every passage in Scripture in which the word “flower” is mentioned, and were to be reminded that man as a flower “cometh up and is cut down.” *

But if the Home and Colonial School Society was, in its early

* See Article “Schools for the Industrial Classes’ Central Society of Education.”

days, disposed to favour, it did not *create* the sort of teaching here alluded to. This had been in existence from the establishment, we may presume, of Infant Schools by Mr. Wilderspin. The entire apparatus of these schools was permeated, so to speak, with a certain species of Biblical lore. The rhyming alphabets most commonly in use were full of hard Scriptural names and Scriptural allusions. The following, taken from a book drawn up by two Infant School masters, and described by the "Literary Gazette" as the best of its kind, will serve as a specimen.

"G. is for Goshen, a rich and fair land.
H. is for Horeb, where Moses did stand.
I. is for Italy, where Rome stands so fair.
J. is for Joppa, and Peter lodged there."

Other lines could easily be quoted far more objectionable, either on account of their ludicrousness, or the painful familiarity with which they treat the most sacred subjects, for the above-named book contains three Scriptural alphabets, all of a similar tenor. Appended to them, are directions for their use—not by the principal teacher, by the way, but by some child monitor, who was to hold up one letter of the alphabet after another, repeating, and making his little class repeat after him, the line with which each letter commenced. In this way it was supposed that, while the alphabet was being taught, Scriptural truths would, also, be impressed indelibly on the mind; for it was forgotten, strangely, that these truths, if conveyed in a dull mechanical manner, without any attempts at explanation or simplification, could of necessity signify nothing to the children themselves, but seem to them only as "words, words, words."

"In regard to the amusements introduced largely—according to
, too largely—into the Infant Schools of the period, I have

not been able to obtain information. I imagine, however, they must have been of a very trivial kind, for of course no approach to the Kinder Garten system had been even dreamt of. Songs, accompanied with the appropriate action, in which modern infants delight, were as yet scarcely known, but the dreary spelling, and *sing-song* parrot-like repetition, was occasionally diversified with singing,—the Scriptural alphabets before alluded to, being set to the venerated air of “Adeste Fideles.” A hymn-book was, however, sometimes used, but the collection it contained, though designed for infants, was little suited to their capacities, which appear indeed, in secular as well as religious matters, to have been greatly over-rated. That the lessons were not sufficiently simple, and that the little pupils had in consequence no idea of what they were learning, was discovered even at the time, and Mr. Dunn, the Secretary of the British and Foreign School Society, gave it as his opinion, arrived at after he had inspected a great variety of Infant Schools, that those really deserving of the name were comparatively few. Yet, despite of this, they were acknowledged on all hands to surpass very greatly the Dame Schools which they were slowly superseding; and a contemporary writer, alive on all points to their defects, says of them, “On the whole, the time of the child is not, in the worst conducted Infant School we have seen, so utterly wasted as in schools in which a boy is often made to spend the whole day in committing to memory page after page of a Latin grammar, of which he has not as yet learnt the meaning of a single word.”

The year 1834 is a memorable one in the history of education, for in that year the lever was first applied whose then only half suspected power has produced such vast results. Lord Brougham

introduced into parliament a bill for promoting education in England and Wales, and a grant was obtained of £20,000 to be applied in affording assistance towards the erection of buildings for elementary schools. The expenditure of this sum, which was renewed yearly, remained, for the first four years, under the control of the Treasury, and was given solely to schools connected with the National and the British and Foreign School Society. No system of Government inspection, or payment according to the results achieved, had as yet been devised. The money was given to applicants, as Mr. MacCarthy points out,* according to the size and cost of their buildings; the consequence being, "that the districts which needed help most, got it the least,"—a circumstance considerably impairing the value of the grant.

But so great and novel an experiment could not fail to have in it some defects, and the mere passing of such a bill at all proves that public attention was awakening, in behalf of the education of the poor. The Central Society of Education was doing its good work. It was pursuing investigations of an important kind into the condition of the country at large, and two volumes of essays, written by various members of the Society, and published respectively in 1837 and 1838, abound in curious and interesting information. Among these essays there is an "Analysis of the Reports of the Manchester Statistical Society"—a few extracts from which will give some idea of the state of the schools—especially of the poor schools—in Manchester and other Northern towns, a little more than forty years ago.

In the Borough of Manchester (Salford, of course, not being included) it appears that the number of the entire population in

* "The History of Our Own Times."

1834* was about 200,000, of which about 50,000 were children, and that the attendance at the different schools stood thus:—

10,108 at Day and Evening Schools.

10,011 at both Day and Sunday Schools.

and the immense proportion of

23,185 at Sunday Schools only.

Making a total of 43,304 scholars.

Now, the whole number of children in Manchester being estimated at 50,000, and a deduction being made of 10,000 for children under five and above fifteen years of age, it would appear that about 33,000 children of the ordinary school ages were receiving some kind of instruction, and that the same was the case with regard to the 10,000 scholars under or above those ages, but that the remainder, or nearly one-third of the whole 50,000, were not attending any schools whatever.

The entire population of Salford was 55,000, the number of children belonging to the different schools, 12,975 :—of whom

3,131 attended Day and Evening Schools,

3,410 „ both Day and Sunday Schools,

6,434 „ Sunday Schools only.

Total 12,975.

Of these, about 2,235 were found to be either above fifteen or under five years of age, leaving about 10,740 as the number of children, of the ordinary school-ages, under course of instruction. The total number of children in Salford, between five and fifteen, being computed at 13,750, it would appear that 3,010 were re-

* When the inquiry was made. See Parliamentary Report on Education, 1834.

ceiving no instruction whatever, with the exception, of course, of those very few who were being taught at their own homes.

Schools of various kinds in Manchester, Salford, Liverpool and Bury, are described with some minuteness in the report, giving by no means a pleasing idea of the manner in which they were frequently conducted. One particular class of schools may be said to have almost wholly passed away—I mean the so-called Dame Schools—at that time, evidently, very numerous, and, for obvious reasons, very popular among the poor. They were kept generally by elderly women, who, past all other work, had taken to teaching as a last resource against the workhouse, and whose tempers were often soured by poverty and bodily infirmity. Very few of these women had been trained for the profession of teachers; a large portion of them, when not incapacitated, had other occupations which they pursued during school-hours, sometimes even in an adjoining room. The rooms in which they assembled their pupils were very dirty and unwholesome, not unfrequently nothing better than cold damp cellars, or else old dilapidated garrets! This deplorable condition of things was brought about, the report further informs us, by the scanty remuneration made to the teachers, whose whole receipts did not average more than nineteen pounds a year, a portion even of this income “being lost, owing to the difficulty of procuring regular payment from the parents of the children.” In three Dame Schools there was no books at all, in others “mere remnants; one school had a single copy of ‘Reading Made Easy.’” A very few were tolerably well provided, but in many instances the children seem to have depended for all hope of instruction upon some chance book brought into the school. It would appear indeed as if in these schools an actual deterioration were taking

place, as if they were inferior to what they had been in former years, for the report says expressly, that "occasionally in some of the more respectable districts" there might still "be found one or two of the primitive Dame Schools" . . . "distinguished by its order and neatness," from the greater portion of this class; words which enable us better to understand the certain amount of respect that "Dames" in olden times unquestionably inspired—apart from Shenstone's schoolmistress.

As for the common Day Schools, another nearly extinct class, they are spoken of as greatly deficient in order and system, while their contempt or neglect of fresh air and cleanliness seems almost to have equalled that which Howard describes as prevailing in the Charter Schools of Ireland. Many of the poorer schools were held in dark, confined rooms, sometimes pervaded by noxious effluvia. The depressing effect of the atmosphere told obviously not only on the health, but on the general intelligence and character of the children; the schools that were dark and dirty being undisciplined and noisy, whereas in those few that possessed the advantages of space, pure light, and cleanliness, order and quiet prevailed in a proportionate degree.

The following description of a Day School is too graphic to be omitted. It was visited by the Society while it was pursuing its enquiries into the educational resources of the lower districts of Liverpool, and it reveals a state of things almost appalling to think of. "In a garret, up three pairs of dark broken stairs," the school was held; it consisted of forty children, compressed into "the compass of ten feet by nine. On a perch, forming a triangle with the corner of the room, sat a cock and two hens, immediately beneath was a dog-kennel in the occupation of three black terriers, whose barking, added to the noise of the children

and the cackling of the fowls at the approach of a stranger, was almost deafening. There was only one small window, at which sat the master, obstructing three-fourths of the light it was capable of admitting." I need not add, that with such surroundings—so injurious to the health, and distracting to the attention of the children—the instruction imparted must have been absolutely worthless. Indeed, though it is not so stated, it appears most likely that the schoolmaster was a sporting character, utterly unworthy of the calling he professed to pursue.

At another school in the same neighbourhood apparently, thirty-eight scholars were found assembled in a dilapidated garret, only twelve feet long by nine wide. Not more than six of the children had any book. A desk at which only five children could be accommodated at the same time was all the provision for writing and arithmetic. The room below the school was occupied by a cobbler, whose wife lay ill of a fever, while he himself was pursuing his employment at her bedside.

In schools like these it necessarily followed that the religious instruction imparted was of the poorest kind. It seldom extended beyond the rehearsal of a catechism, and no attempts whatever were made to mingle with it sound moral instruction. "Morals!" exclaimed one of the schoolmasters, on being asked whether he taught them, "Morals!" and he glanced, we may suppose contemptuously at his scholars, "how am I to teach them to such as these?" "Morals!" said another, in answer to a similar enquiry, "that question does not belong to us, it belongs to the girl's school"—a satire uttered in sublime unconsciousness.

As will be evident from the last given anecdote, the common day schools hitherto referred to were for boys alone. Those for girls are spoken of more favourably, the order and discipline

being better, and some of the schoolmistresses possessing apparently real qualifications for teaching. No particulars are given concerning them, or these would have been interesting for quotation.

Taken as a whole, pupils of this class learned nothing beyond reading, writing, and the rudiments of arithmetic. Yet they paid fairly well for such limited instruction, as much on an average as eight-pence a week.

With respect to the private schools of a superior order, which the Statistical Committee attempted to include in their enquiries, but little information could be obtained. They must, however, have surpassed those of an earlier date, for the subjects taught in them included history and geography, as well as, in many instances, the modern languages, music and drawing.

Of schools attached to churches, chapels, or secular institutions, and therefore comprehended under the general head of "Charity Schools," the report says nothing of especial note. On the whole they seem to have been fairly well conducted, but the school-rooms were often low, and very imperfectly ventilated, the close depressing atmosphere affecting injuriously—though probably quite unconsciously—the mental capacities of both learners and teachers. Where the attendance was large and the school directed by one master, with the help of monitors only (according to the Bell and Lancaster plan) the teaching was too apt to be mechanical, scant attention being paid to the communication of such general knowledge as might awaken the minds of the scholars; but the fault here indicated was by no means confined to these particular schools—though resulting in part from the monitorial system, it may be found pervading all ordinary education even down to the present day.

Of the Infant Schools it is curious to learn, that the Society found five only in Manchester, three in Salford, seventeen at Liverpool, and four at Bury. They are mentioned with commendation, and said to present a favourable contrast to the Dame and common Day Schools, and even to the schools conducted on the Madras or Lancaster methods. Their numbers being small, a good deal of emulation existed among their teachers, which accounted, perhaps, in part, for their apparently unusual excellence.

The Sunday Schools in the above-named towns reached the number of 204, with a proportionately large attendance of 62,542 children. In these schools the direct teaching was, of course, chiefly reading, their main purpose being to convey a knowledge of the Bible, and of moral and religious truth. Occasionally, however, instruction was given in writing and arithmetic.

As the results of its investigations, the Manchester Statistical Society states, that it is "convinced that improvement in this (elementary) class of schools is hopeless, so long as they remain without assistance or direction from some body vastly superior both in pecuniary means and intelligence to those in whose hands they were;" adding, "that the 'great desiderata' were—first, proper school-rooms, and a supply of school books; secondly, a sufficient number of competent teachers." I quote these words in full, because, read in the light of the present day, there seems something of prophetic wisdom in them, a forecasting of the better state of things we see around us now. The "desiderata" pointed out are precisely those which the Educational Department has made the most strenuous efforts to secure for elementary education.

The inquiries instituted by the Statistical Society of Manchester, led the way to other enquiries—also of a statistical nature—bearing principally on the state of education among the poor of the metropolis. They were carried on, in the years 1836 and 1837, by the Committee of the Central Society of Education, and their results are given in a valuable paper by the late Mr. G. R. Porter, of the Board of Trade. His article contains much information on the general condition of the working classes, but, as far as possible, I shall confine myself to quotations that have to do with education alone.

A very large parish in London—that of St. Marylebone—first engaged the Committee's attention, as it presented some features of peculiar interest. It contained a certain densely populated district called Callmel-buildings, and this was made the subject of careful inquiry on account of its wretchedness and degradation. It consisted of 288 families, the whole of these being crowded into twenty-six houses only! They belonged, of course, to a very low class, and were chiefly Irish Catholics. Their intellectual status is thus described:—203 of the parents could read, and some among that number write, but 244—or fifty-five per cent. of the whole—could neither read nor write. About one-fourth of the children went to school, and in rather more than a third of the families books of some nature were to be found—religious books—chiefly relating to the doctrines of the Roman Catholic Church. There was a school in the court attended by about fifty scholars, and held in a room twelve feet square and eight and a half high—the only abode of the schoolmaster, his wife and six children. The system of payment was certainly *sui generis*, and was thus conducted:—A species of club, not, however, consisting exclusively of the parents of the children, as

Saturday night at a neighbouring public-house, and here a subscription was raised for the benefit of the schoolmaster, who formed one of the party, and who was expected to spend a portion of the money handed over to him in entertaining his subscribers. On the probable worthlessness of such a school it would be superfluous to dilate; yet the inhabitants of Callmel-buildings seem to have paid rather highly, considering their circumstances, for the schooling of their children, the average payment for each scholar, where payment was regular, being five-pence farthing a week.

A somewhat similar district, likewise in Marylebone, was next examined. It consisted of 2,624 individuals, of whom 1,274 were children. From an inquiry made into the educational attainments of 797 adults—358 males and 439 females—the following results were obtained. Of the whole 797, 183 men and 112 women could read and write, 54 men and 82 women could read only, and 121 men and 245 women could neither read nor write. Out of 825 children, old enough to receive instruction, it was ascertained that only 124 boys and 82 girls went to school, that 251 boys and 279 girls were unable to read, and likewise that although very many of these children were English, and therefore, in all probability of Protestant parentage, they were so destitute of the purest elements of religious knowledge, that 238 boys and 235 girls could not even repeat the Lord's Prayer!

But the Central Society of Education did not restrict its investigations to Marylebone. It extended them to the parishes of St. Martin's in the Fields, St. Clement's Danes, St. Paul's, Covent Garden, and the district of the Savoy. The returns thus obtained show, that at that period (1837) there were in these

parishes only 114 schools, with an attendance of 4,770 scholars.

Of the latter there were:—

666	who attended Sunday Schools <i>alone</i> .
340	„ „ Dame Schools.
784	„ „ Common Day Schools.
510	„ „ Middling „ „
525	„ „ Superior „ „
660	„ „ Infant Schools.
735	„ „ National and Parochial Schools.
466	„ „ other Charity and Endowed Schools.
84	„ „ Evening Schools.

Making a total of 4,770 children.

Besides the children who attended Sunday Schools *alone*, 889 Sunday scholars were Day scholars also, and as such registered as connected with one or other of the poorer classes of schools given in the above abstract.

The Sunday Schools were seven in number. In six of these the instruction imparted seems to have been limited to reading the Bible; in the seventh, “Bible History” was taught in addition,—we suppose a book bearing that name; for how Biblical history could possibly be dissevered from *any* intelligent mode of teaching the Scriptures, it is difficult to understand. The Society came to the opinion, that whatever good influence the Sunday Schools might diffuse, they imparted nothing in the way of secular instruction, and that therefore the 666 children attending Sunday Schools alone, ought to be deducted from the gross number returned as being under instruction in the four districts named above.

With regard to the Dame Schools, twenty-one in number, a conclusion very similar was arrived at. Their method of teach-

ing was so defective, that the scholars learned nothing beyond a little reading and spelling, badly acquired; and, in the case of girls, of a little needlework. Their condition, however, appears in point of situation and general cleanliness, to have been by no means so deplorable as those of Manchester; and this much may be said also in favour of the common Day Schools. The latter were not held in cellars, nor were they in a state of chronic misrule; but the teaching was dull and unintelligent, and was limited to reading, writing, and arithmetic, all very imperfectly conveyed.

In the middling Day Schools, twenty in number, something higher was aimed at. Grammar, history, and geography formed part of the instruction, at least nominally, for they were taught, we are told, in a "slovenly manner;" but the thirteen superior Day Schools examined by the Society afforded their pupils, as a rule, the means of procuring a good education—the subjects of instruction being music, dancing, French, Italian, and sometimes German, with the addition of the classics—we suppose for boys alone.

The Infant Schools were not more than five in number, a circumstance due doubtless to the fact, that all schools of this nature were then comparatively of very recent growth. Those in question are said, as usual, to have greatly surpassed the Dame Schools of the period.

The Parochial, National, Endowed and other Charity Schools seem to have been of the ordinary kind, calling for no particular comment. Some of them had existed since the close of the seventeenth century, from which period dates, as has before been pointed out, the first effort made to extend education to the poor at large.

From the above noticed Report it is very evident that the educational provision of the metropolis was insufficient to a marked degree, some forty years ago. This was especially the case with regard to the masses, although there can be no question that greater demand would have produced greater supply. But the demand unfortunately was wanting, the children of ignorant parents were suffered in many instances to remain in ignorance because they preferred idleness, or any species of manual employment, to the constraints of school; and, no system of compulsion then existing, they either went without any school-training at all, or submitted to it for a few weeks or months only, according to their own capricious fancy. To the Normal School of the British and Foreign School Society, that of the Borough Road, 500 children, all boys apparently, were at this time attached, and, according to Mr. Dunn, they might, in point of attendance, be divided into three classes: the first remained for a few weeks or months only; the second, from a year to a year and a half; the third, very limited in number, would possibly remain for three years, receiving in consequence what was then regarded as a very fair education, though most likely it was below the requirements demanded of those who are now examined under Standard IV.

But the fault is not to be attributed solely to supine parents, and restless, erratic children; nor were schools of an elementary order deficient in number alone. Their quality, as I have already shown, was very defective, not in the case of the common Day and Dame Schools merely, but of the ordinary National Schools also; and sometimes, perhaps, even of the British—superior as these were acknowledged to be. At the risk of appearing tedious I will take again a few examples, culled once more from revelations made through the Statistical Society.

century, I must not omit all mention of the attempts made to bring under some kind of teaching and training the poorest of the poor—the Street Arabs and gutter-children, as they now are popularly called. About seventy or eighty years ago, a few benevolent persons connected with Surrey Chapel, commenced a school to which they gave the name of a Fragment School, meaning to denote, that they had gathered into it all the scattered fragments they could find—the little waifs and strays of society. The effort proved sufficiently successful to induce others to take it up, and schools were formed somewhat resembling the Ragged Schools of our day. But John Pounds, of Portsmouth, has obtained the most wide-spread and lasting honour for work done in this direction; indeed, he is regarded by many high authorities—I think Dr. Guthrie was among the number—as the real originator of Ragged Schools. He was a man of humble origin and position, a cobbler by trade; and pleasant stories are told of how, while seated in his little workshop, mending boots and shoes, with his cat perched upon his shoulder, he would gather around him—perhaps with the bribe of a hot potato—scores of neglected children, whom he would teach to read by the help of pieces of paper torn from the hoardings. Notwithstanding the poverty of his apparatus he is said to have imparted the rudiments of learning to about five hundred.

To secure such results needed, of course, a remarkable genius for teaching, and this John Pounds unquestionably possessed. Yet he had several imitators, two belonging even to his own rank in life; and, although owing to the peculiar difficulties it involved, the good work spread but slowly, the Ragged Schools established in London in 1844, when the Ragged School Union was originated, had reached the number of twenty. The most

perplexing question has always been, how to keep the schools well filled while confining them to the destitute poor, and answers have been found in the shape of providing dinners, and offering other bribes of doubtful expediency. But whether or not the direct effect of the Ragged School movement has always been beneficial, there can be no doubt it has wrought out indirectly an incalculable amount of good as the parent of institutions a Christian country should be especially proud of; for, in a very literal sense, they carry on the work of seeking and saving that which was lost.

The Elementary Schools of Scotland have already been spoken of as more numerous and more efficient than those of England, but perhaps they hardly maintained their proportionate superiority beyond the close of the last century; for Mr. Wyse, who visited them rather more than forty years ago, speaks of their general condition in no very favourable terms. The salaries of the schoolmasters, fixed originally at a certain rate, dependent on the varying price of corn, had indeed been raised after repeated applications, but were still much below the merits of a competent teacher. The consequence was, that inferior men were sometimes chosen, men who, setting out in life with the Church in view, and failing to obtain an appointment, had taken to teaching as a means of subsistence. Or else it often happened that the post of schoolmaster was filled by some young theological student, fresh from College, and actually licensed to preach, but willing, while waiting for a cure of souls, to play the part of Dominie to boys and girls of the peasant class. Untrained, untried, unaccustomed to exercise the particular self-restraint which his office required, what wonder if his patience often failed? With regard to those very subjects to which he had

most earnest attention, subjects of abstruse divinity, he found, perhaps, that the minds of his pupils were particularly dull and unimpressible, and doubtless, he occasionally yielded to the temptation of instilling knowledge with the help of violence. Corporal punishment, with all its attendant effects of depressing and deadening the slower intellects, and arousing, not so much the repentant, as the combative and resentful feelings of the more intelligent and lively, still held sway in most of the Scotch Parochial Schools. A few teachers, even in the remoter districts, were sufficiently enlightened to own that it had failed, but a prejudice in its favour existed among the people themselves, and through its means—gratifying, it must be owned, to the impatience of instructors—the order and discipline of the schools were in general maintained, and the scholars held in subjection. The course of instruction, if not so limited as in former years—when the Bible and the Assembly's Catechism were often made to serve as the sole lesson-books—was still narrow and contracted, and the scholars were treated too much as mere machines, capable of originating nothing. Yet, with his condemnation, Mr. Wyse couples a certain amount of praise, and foretells the dawning of a brighter day. He speaks of the "new education," which, in the shape of Infant Schools, Mechanics' Institutes, Colleges, &c., he sees springing up in different parts of Scotland, and he suggests a plan for the extension and improvement of education which has actually been carried out in the present generation.

Of Ireland, it is melancholy to have to record, that education seems there to have remained for a long time stationary. From the period of Howard's inspection, until after the Rebellion of 1798, no attention appears to have been paid to the Charter Schools, the buildings continuing in a ruinous state, and the

scholars in a condition of great neglect and disorder. In 1803, however, the Incorporated Society rescinded the rule to admit none but the children of Papists, and five years afterwards two gentlemen were empowered officially to visit these schools, and to give the result of their inquiries. Influenced, we cannot help supposing, by party spirit, the report they made was very favourable; it delighted many, among the number Mr. Edgeworth, who expressed in a letter the warm satisfaction it afforded him; and yet, on further inquiry, it was proved, beyond a doubt, to be highly coloured—some of the very masters to whom praise had been awarded being subsequently dismissed for neglect of duty.

At length, in the year 1825, Parliament instituted proceedings against the administrators of the Charter School system, and in the course of a long and patient investigation, disclosures were made of a heart-rending kind. It appeared that the number of the scholars had gradually so much diminished, that, though it had latterly been recruited by 500 poor afflicted objects drafted in from the Dublin Foundling Hospital, it amounted only to 1,700. Some melancholy cases were recorded of boys being punished with terrible severity for getting through less weaving than the masters required; and, as no offence was, generally speaking, so unpardonable as that of daring to utter a complaint, depression, and sullenness, and torpor of mind everywhere prevailed. The expenditure of the Society, during the ninety years it had been in operation, amounted to £1,612,138, of which £1,027,715 had been derived from Parliamentary grants; but the Commissioners of Inquiry now came to the conclusion, that the evil inherent in the whole system was "too monstrous" to be remedied, and determined to sweep it away with a bold hand. The customary grants were therefore withdrawn.

Incorporated Society, supported only by its own endowments, was left to linger on until it died a natural death.

With its extinction, died also the old idea that elementary education in Ireland must necessarily be of a proselytising nature. Five years after it had received its death-blow, in July, 1831, a new organization, that of a National School Board, was embodied in a bill introduced into Parliament by Mr. Wyse, and, in the October following, adopted by Lord Stanley. It preceded the passing of Lord Brougham's celebrated bill, of which mention has already been made, and it is pleasant to have to record, that within a short time the Board had under its direction more than a thousand schools, where Catholic and Protestant could sit side by side, at the same desk, acquiring together the A B C of secular knowledge.

But it is time now to turn again to our own country, and note the changes which the last forty years have effected in its educational position. In 1839, while the Melbourne ministry was still in power, Lord John Russell asked for an increase of £10,000 in the educational grant, and proposed some alterations in the distribution of the money, which hitherto had been given exclusively for the erection of school-buildings in connexion with either the National or the British and Foreign School Society. The opposition he encountered was great,* but, after a gallant fight, (during which he could count among his opponents Mr. Disraeli, Mr. Gladstone, and Sir Robert Peel), he obtained the increase he demanded, though he failed to carry all his propositions. In the same year, an Order of Council transferred the distribution of the

* See "The History of Our Own Times," by Justine MacCarthy.

public grants from the Treasury, to a Committee of Council appointed "to superintend the application of any sums voted by Parliament for the purpose of promoting public education," and the Committee proceeded, almost at the outset, to lay down rules for the guidance of authorised Inspectors, establishing the "right of inspection" as an indispensable condition with respect to all schools receiving Government aid—a condition never since departed from.

From this time Government may fairly be said to have entered on a course which was to widen out the further it was pursued. It had taken, to a certain degree, the education of the people into its own hands, and was from henceforth bound to watch over it with jealous care. The opposition which its intervention had to encounter was great, and by no means confined to the prejudiced of any party. Earnest men, of enlightened views, objected to an organized system of Government education, partly from the dread of its extinguishing voluntary effort, partly also, because they believed it might interfere unduly with parental rights and the liberty of the subject. We can imagine too, that they were afraid of an Education Rate, thinking that its burden would press heavily and injuriously on classes in reality as poor as those for whose benefit it was to be imposed, and that these classes would resent it as an injustice. Nor can we say that experience has absolutely falsified all these apprehensions. Now and then perhaps—especially since the passing of the Education Act of 1876—there may, with regard to individuals, have been cases of hardship; but these, on the whole, have been borne with patiently, and with, at least, a tacit sense of their inevitableness as part of a great scheme for the general weal. And, whether or not, we were disposed originally to favour

National Education, we feel that the practical working of the system has done, and is doing, a vast amount of good; that it has not abolished parental authority, or paralysed private effort, but has extended the blessing of education to multitudes that, without its compelling power, would have been left in darkness and degradation.

Mention has already been made of the appointment of Inspectors as early as the year 1839. In 1844 we find them in full work, and learn that they were empowered by the Council of Education to inquire into the incomes of schools assisted by Government. Their Report, apparently, produced some important changes, for the Council broke through the old rule of allowing funds for building purposes only, and came to the resolution of making grants to all schools submitting to Government inspection. Two years later, in 1846, another important step was taken in the organisation of the pupil-teacher system, the requirements of certificates as a qualification for the presiding teachers of Government schools, and the regulation of payments according to the results obtained at each annual examination. The restriction limiting the Government grants to the National and British Schools was now withdrawn, and the number of schools inspected in England and Wales increased with great rapidity. In the years 1838-9, the number of children above the age of seven, utterly destitute of any kind of education, was estimated at 112,035. Those in attendance at National Schools amounted to 514,450, and at British and other Dissenting Schools to 47,287, making a total of 561,737 daily scholars. But in the course of the next twelve or thirteen years a great improvement had taken place in the number of daily scholars, as the following statistics will prove; for, we must bear in mind, that they refer only to

the schools under *inspection*, and not to the class, formerly numerous, which had not submitted to Government regulations.

Year.	No. of Schools Inspected.	Scholars.	Certificated Teachers.	Pupil Teachers.	Amount of School Pence.
1851	2,310	271,126	883	4,815	£84,039
1855	4,234	519,798	3,069	8,465	178,630
1860	6,495	837,162	7,249	14,949	312,935
1865	7,770	1,026,748	11,266	11,383	424,546
1869	9,468	1,285,319	13,977	15,016	549,328

The expenditure, from Parliamentary vote, had increased from £164,313 in 1851 to £773,839 in 1869; and the amount derived from voluntary subscriptions from £86,999 to £458,720—figures that cannot fail to be satisfactory to those who are in favour of voluntary aid. In the statistics given above it will be noticed that a rather remarkable decrease occurred in the number of pupil-teachers between the years 1860 and 1865. Yet this can hardly be wondered at, considering the stringent rules to which pupil-teachers were subject, the necessity laid upon them of undergoing an apprenticeship for four long years,* and of passing, each year, an examination of increasing difficulty. The mental strain is too severe, the rate of payment too small, to induce many young persons, of either sex, to persevere until the end of the course, unless they have a decided taste and talent for teaching. Frequently they enter upon it, and continue for a year or so, then become disheartened or disgusted by the difficulties they have to encounter, and turn their minds to other means of

* The apprenticeship was for five years originally.

obtaining a livelihood. This waste of time, and of public money, is of course to be deplored, but, under the circumstances it is, perhaps, unavoidable, and the rigid requirements of Government have, at least, the effect of weeding out from the teacher-class a vast number of incapables.

There can be no doubt, that the Bell and Lancaster methods of mutual instruction led the way to our present pupil-teacher system, but the gulf is wide indeed, between a raw, untrained monitor, hardly able to spell out a word of two syllables, and a pupil-teacher, who, in the last year of his or her course, is expected to pass an examination in reading, grammar—including an acquaintance with the English language, its source and growth, and an essay to be written on some given subject—geography, arithmetic, and history, with Euclid and algebra for male pupil-teachers, and needlework in the case of females.

Whether mastery over all these subjects is really essential for a teacher whose scholars rarely reach the age of fourteen is not a question I have here to discuss. Some may be of opinion that the pendulum has not yet attained to its proper oscillation, but, that after swinging too far to the left, it is swinging equally far to the right now, but none can doubt that excess of learning in a teacher (and it *can* be excess only if not digested or judiciously applied) is better than such ignorance as must have been displayed by parochial schoolmistresses a century ago, when they were not expected to understand writing, or the rudiments even, of arithmetic! And although we may not regard intellectual culture as the panacea for all moral evils, yet the testimony of statistics—unromantic and impartial—proves to us that ignorance is in some way connected with crime; and, if the mere knowledge of reading and writing is favourable to morality, we certainly

have a right to anticipate good moral effects from the varied information which our present certificated teachers have been educated to impart.

It would not be possible to cast even a rapid glance at all the different classes of schools that now receive help from Government. One particularly important class must not, however, be wholly omitted; I refer to those schools that owe their origin, in great measure, to the Ragged School movement. Under this category may be included the Reformatories, the Certified Industrial Schools, the Training Ships, the Homes for Destitute Children,* which have done such an incalculable amount of good, rescuing thousands from temptations to evil beyond all ordinary powers of conception, and affording the opportunity of making a good start in life as well-trained sailors, handicraftsmen, or domestic servants.

Reformatories are under the direction of the Home Secretary Department, "which is not strictly speaking an Educational body," but they have for their object the reformation—through the medium of teaching and industrial training—of juvenile offenders, and in this way are connected with education. Attempts to reclaim young criminals are not absolutely new. The Philanthropic Schools, long existing in St. George's Fields, held a position of some prominence at the close of the last century, and although they may have been originally designed for the reception of the *children* of criminals alone, they certainly numbered among their inmates, as far back as forty years ago, some few, at least, who had themselves been guilty of crimes. But generally speaking, children committed for a first offence

* Comprehended under the general head of Certified Industrial Schools when connected with Government.

were treated in the same manner as hardened criminals, and it is startling to find that a boy of thirteen, who had never before been convicted, might, for taking part in a theft, be transported to Botany Bay. But Howard in the last century, and Mrs. Fry in the early part of the present, had pointed out the frightful evils arising from the indiscriminate association of criminals of different ages and classes, and their statements, together with the confirmatory reports of the prison inspectors, produced at length some solid effect. Public interest was awakened, and the establishment of Reformatories through individual effort, induced the Home Secretary in 1845 to take up the cause of Criminal Education.

In 1854 the Reformatory School Act was passed, and three years afterwards, Prison Inspectors were specially appointed by the Home Office to the task of inspecting and reporting on both the Reformatory and Industrial Schools—these two classes of schools being conducted much on the same plan; the great distinction between them consisting in this, that whereas, in one case, the inmates are children who have been convicted of crime, in the other they are destitute children merely—not criminals, though poverty and neglect have caused them to be exposed to many temptations.

The low educational status of young offenders is proved by the following statistics, favourable certainly to the moral effects of education.

Of the 78 boys admitted into Reformatories in the course of the year 1869 these returns are given :—

- 34 could neither read nor write.
- 12 could read only very imperfectly.
- 11 could read and write imperfectly.
- 20 could read and write fairly.
- 1 could read and write well.

Instruction in the elements of learning is given of course to this unfortunate class, but the time of the children is chiefly devoted to industrial occupations. Certainly the money spent upon their training is well employed if we look upon it simply from a selfish point of view. Here and there, indeed, the results may be disappointing, but, as a general rule, they are to a high degree cheering and encouraging—a positive monetary gain to society. “Considering,” says Mr. Bartley, “that all the children have been convicted, some indeed many times (in one instance a boy from London, of from twelve to fourteen years of age, who could neither read nor write, had been sentenced no less than ten times) it may fairly be presumed, that practically, they would all, if left to themselves, become permanent criminals, and be at least unproductive members of, if not destructive agents to, society. It is not too much to say, that all who turn out well are so many thieves converted into useful citizens;” and, he adds, “as the average cost of each reformed boy during his school term of three years is £25 a year, it follows that his total burden to the country is £75. Had he been left alone, the best thing he could have done for the community would have been to remain in the workhouse, for say twenty years, at a charge of at least 7s. a week, but in all probability he would, as a professional thief, have wasted ten times that amount.”

The story of certified Industrial Schools is so closely analogous to that of Reformatories that there is no occasion to touch upon it here, but something must be said of the efforts made by Government to promote the general weal in a very different direction, through the establishment, I mean, of Art and Science Classes. A sense of our inferiority to other nations in the department of ornamental design led to the formation

Government School of Art—called originally School of Design—which was opened at Somerset House in 1837. It commenced with only twelve pupils, but the attendance increased with great rapidity. Provincial schools were established, and seven years later the total number of scholars, male and female, attached to Schools of Design in London and elsewhere amounted to 1,313. It must nevertheless be owned that the original idea was rather widely departed from in many instances, and that, in the provinces especially, the Schools of Design became virtually Drawing Schools only. To remedy the evil, and stimulate the pupils to aim at something higher than that of being mere copyists, scholarships were granted, books on art collected, and preparations made for the formation of our present Art Library at South Kensington.

The year 1857 witnessed the removal of the Central School of Art from Marlborough House (where it had been for some time established) to South Kensington, and at that period the number of Art students throughout the country, including those receiving instruction in public schools, had increased to 35,333.

To the Department of Practical Art, that of Science was added in the year 1853, but the spread of Science Schools has been very slow, owing to a want of appreciation of their value on the part of the classes they were specially designed to benefit. In the earlier years at least of their establishment, a certain prejudice against them prevailed among the working people themselves, for it is recorded that even in the enlightened city of Manchester a young artisan could hardly continue his "attendance at a science class, owing to the taunts and illtreatment of his companions." But experience wrought a happy change, for six or seven years later, science classes were eagerly demanded by the very persons

who once had opposed them, regarding as in some way "inimical to their trade."

While upon this subject I may as well mention, to prevent the necessity of recurring to it again, that the Art and Science Department furnishes us with the following particulars respecting the present position of its schools throughout the United Kingdom.

Year.	Number of Schools.	Number of Students.
1873	1,182	48,546
1874	1,136	53,050
1875	1,299	52,669
1876	1,426	57,988
1877	1,348	55,927

These figures show considerable fluctuations, and a steady and unvarying increase would, doubtless, have been more satisfactory, but probably we shall see this when the novelty of the experiment has worn off, and has consequently had the effect of withdrawing from the field many persons who, possessing no real taste for Science or Art, were ignorant enough to suppose that either of these could be mastered without difficulty. The numbers attending the Art Lectures at the South Kensington Museum have varied in like number, falling from 9,020 in 1873, to 6,303 in 1874, after which an improvement took place, the attendance in 1877 having been 8,481, or nearly equal to that recorded of 1873. Attempts to teach drawing—more or less successful probably—had been made in that year (1877) in 3,767 Elementary Schools, and 172 science teachers attended special courses of lec-

tures provided for their instruction at the New Schools of Science at South Kensington. The distribution of Science and Art-Schools is 1,079 in England and Wales, 114 in Scotland, and 155 in Ireland.*

The year 1870 inaugurated a new Educational epoch, the history of which still lies in the future. The provisions of the Education Act, that then came into operation, are almost too well known to need repetition, they are briefly these: it was ordained that "when the amount of school accommodation in any part of England or Wales was insufficient, and the sufficiency not supplied, that a Board School should be formed to supply the deficiency; and that every Elementary School being a public school, if conducted according to regulation, it should not be regarded as a condition of any child's being admitted or continuing in the school that he should attend any religious observance or instruction in the school or elsewhere from which he might be withdrawn by his parents."

From this era dates the erection of that vast machinery which, through the medium of Board Schools and the adoption of the principle of compulsion, is making such stupendous efforts for the spread of national education. Whether the lowest classes of all have as yet been reached—whether, indeed, they can be reached, unless our present educational system is modified to meet their capabilities, is an open question, disputed even among the most competent judges. One thing however is very certain; though the law may not unfrequently be evaded, it has a marked effect, for numberless parents, too ignorant or too selfish to care naturally for the education of their children, are induced to do so

* Close of 1877.

through wholesome awe of the pains and penalties of the Education Act of 1876—an Act declaring it to be the duty of every parent of every child, between the ages of five and fourteen, to see that he receives instruction in reading, writing, and arithmetic.

The following statistics will show the growth of Elementary Day Schools—Board Schools as well as Voluntary—in England and Wales.

Year.	No. of Schools Inspected.	NO. OF CHILDREN ON REGISTERS.		
		Under 7 years of age.	Between 7 and 13.	About and above 13.
1874	12,167	916,591	1,498,138	82,873
1875	13,217	983,995	1,668,054	92,251
1876	14,273	1,041,219	1,799,785	102,770
1877	15,187	1,100,116	1,929,523	125,334

Of course, the number on the registers does not represent the average attendance, which is always of necessity considerably lower. In 1874, out of a total of 2,497,602 scholars enrolled upon the school books, the average daily attendance throughout the year was 1,678,759; and in 1877 the average attendance was 2,150,683 against a total of 3,154,973 scholars. The average attendance compared with the numbers on the books will, of course, increase in proportion to the efficiency with which the School Board Visitors carry on their work of supervision, and to the general appreciation of the value of education among the poor. It appears that the sum expended by School Boards during 1877 was £3,187,535 in England and Wales. The total amount received from School rates in England was £1,046,971, and in Wales £56,709.

Previous to the Education Act of 1870 the Scotch Elementary

Schools rested mainly, as has before been noticed, on the old parochial system, but in that year the Act established in Scotland, for a limited time, an Education Board, with power to form Local School Boards—similar to those of England—in different parts of the country. Since that time the Scotch Elementary Schools have steadily increased, and on August 31st, the day closing the Scotch educational year, it is reported that the Inspectors, in the course of the preceding twelvemonth, had visited 2,931 Day Schools, affording accommodation for 535,949 scholars, of whom there were 472,668 on the registers; 105,491 being infants under seven, 335,037 between seven and thirteen, and 32,140 above thirteen. The average daily attendance, compared with the number of children enrolled, was large, in proportion to that of England, being 360,413.

The establishment of a National Board of Education in Ireland has already been noticed. It has worked well under the definitely stated principle, that the National Schools should be open to Christians of every denomination, and that no pupil should be required to attend any religious exercise, or receive any religious instruction of which his parents shall disapprove. This regulation reads strangely at variance with a law made in the reign of Queen Anne, to the effect, that children of Catholic parents, even while yet of tender years, might, on professing Protestantism, be freed, at once, from parental control—but we know it would have gladdened the heart of the enlightened Howard could he have foreseen that it would come into action, and we cannot help fancying that his burning words respecting the Charter School system, may have been as “bread cast upon the waters,” and “found again after many days.” The Charter Schools which he visited, professed only to educate 2,100, the

numbers being in reality less; the Elementary Schools, maintained through the aid of grants made by the Lord Lieutenant, under the direction of the Irish Commissioners of Education, show the following returns which, making all allowance for the increase in the population, must be regarded as satisfactory. In 1860 there were 5,632 schools connected with the National Society, and at the close of 1877 this number had increased to 7,370, with a roll of 1,598,316 children, and an average daily attendance—low in proportion, it must be owned, to that of Scotland—of 418,063.* The number of Art and Science Schools have already been stated as amounting to 155, showing a decrease of 10 on the previous year; whereas in Scotland, schools of the same class, had increased from 112 in 1876 to 114 in 1877.

It would be interesting to ascertain in which department in each country the increase or the decrease chiefly lay—whether Science was more congenial to the severer temperament of the Scotch, or the greater imaginative power believed to be possessed by the Irish, led them to incline towards Art. I have myself heard it said, by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors, Mr. Matthew Arnold—in this matter, certainly, a most competent authority—that in Wales the children belonging to Elementary Schools read poetry with far more spirit and appearance of appreciation than children of the same class in England; a very singular fact, and one which (if we believe in national peculiarities and the truth of hereditary) seems curiously associated with the influence exerted by Welsh Bards of olden times. Surely, it might be well worth while, in connection with the

* The startling difference between the average daily attendance and the number on the books should surely be made the subject of serious inquiry.

Art and Science Schools, and indeed, with public schools generally, to study out the subject I have indicated, since it would lead, perhaps, to results important to education.

And here I pause ; appalled by the very magnitude of my subject—a magnitude that seems to baffle all attempts at condensation. A sense of it has so oppressed me, that I have confined my remarks principally, and latterly almost exclusively to primary education. I have not spoken of the changes which have come over our Grammar Schools, through their admission, into the ordinary course of instruction, of the common branches of learning—not classical or grammatical—a matter of so much difficulty (owing to its supposed violation of the wishes of the founders) that in the case of some schools it could only be overcome by the decision of the Lord Chancellor. I have said nothing also of the improvements which have taken place in our Public Schools—strictly so called—softening the severity of their discipline, and introducing into them a humaner tone ; neither have I alluded to the high intellectual position which woman, if she chooses it, is now permitted to occupy, nor to that readiness to gratify her craving for mental cultivation which has led to the erection of Girton College and Newnham Hall, enabling us to see the actual realization of the idea of “sweet girl-graduates” that Tennyson satirised—though very gently and lovingly—not thirty years ago.

But there is one very important matter connected with the improvements which have taken place in education that well deserves our notice. Progress has been made, not in the diffusion of knowledge alone, nor in the manner of communicating it, but in the general method of treating the young. Under the old *régime*, the sentiment of fear was raised almost into a motive in the attainment of learning. Inability to say a lesson,

the result perhaps of defective teaching, imperfect comprehension or natural dullness, was enough to bring upon a young scholar, who possibly had been doing his best, the disgrace and misery of being branded with the epithet "dunce," and exhibited to the ridicule of his companions with a flaunting "fool's cap" on his head.

Badges of disgrace used habitually, in Parochial Schools, to be attached to unfortunate culprits who had been detected in any fault, still with the same idea of holding them up as fit objects for laughter and scorn. School-boys of every rank, were said, in common parlance, to be "under the rod"—words expressing a very literal truth; and masters, while beating their pupils, would tell them that "they did so to save them from the gallows."

Such things as these seem strange to us at the present day, when the necessity for corporal punishment, even of the most moderate kind, is an open question, discussed from time to time by the London School Board. That the rule restricting its administration to the head teachers, is always observed as it ought to be, or that these teachers never inflict it unadvisedly, I am not prepared to say; but it is pleasant to reflect, that the severities practised in a past age, by clergymen of high position and character, would now entail upon an ordinary Board School master the penalty of instant dismissal from his office.

Pleasant, also, is it to contrast the general brightness, cleanliness, the fair amount of intelligence to be met with in our training ships and homes for destitute children, with the squalor, the wretchedness, the cruelty, and the ignorance that were winked at in the case of the Charter Schools of Ireland, and even in that of the Pauper Schools of our own country, those schools which Dickens pourtrayed, with very pardonable exaggeration, in "Oliver Twist."

It has indeed been remarked, that "the science of education is still far in advance of the art;" but surely there is nothing wonderful in this, since theory is ever in advance of practice—a truth acknowledged to its fullest extent by Shakespear, who makes his wisest heroine say, "I can easier teach twenty what were good to be done, than be one of the twenty to follow mine own teaching."

Still, when all is said, I would not have it be thought that I look upon the goal as already attained in matters of education, or as at all likely to be speedily attained, even if the same line of action should be pursued, and the improvements I have pointed out, be carried yet further. If we stand and watch an in-coming tide, we now and then observe in it a receding wave, that seems to retard its progress; and so it is in human affairs, progress is never made without an occasional false or backward step; and it is just possible that, while we have gained much, we have lost something, through our altered system of education. Setting aside the mere question of manners, which necessarily must change, "as the old order changeth giving way to new," it cannot be denied, that the greater freedom now accorded to children and young people of all classes of society, has tended to foster in them a spirit of independence that, not unfrequently, shows itself in an offensive mode. In its rougher, ruder forms, we see it in our streets, breaking out in full force the instant that the restraints imposed by school discipline have been removed; but it is not wholly absent even from our homes, and we see its ill-effects in the lessening of respect, of reverence, of willingness to submit to lawful authority, and to show due consideration for others.

Its accruing in part from our present system

of treating the young, in part perhaps from influences too subtle for us to understand, and which we can term only "the spirit of the age"—do not appear to us altogether satisfactory, and we are tempted, in some moment of despondency, to ask ourselves, "Were 'the former days' indeed 'better than these?'" it will surely need but a very slight glance into the matter—such a glance as I have been trying to give, to convince us that we have not "inquired wisely concerning this," and that could we in reality be placed in the midst of those old good times after which we sigh, we should be amazed and dismayed by the darkness, the ignorance, the frightful amount of error and prejudice that once enveloped the great subject of Education.

